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WASHTENAW JEWISH NEWS

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Life and Fate in a Russian jail

By Robert Chandler, this story was originally published in the Forward.

My translation of Vasily Grossman's *Life and Fate* was first published in 1985. Back then, the novel — the Russian text of which was first published in Switzerland in 1980, some two decades after Grossman, a Ukrainian Jew, completed it — was seen as oddly old-fashioned. It was the heyday of magical realism and postmodernism. Grossman's moral seriousness and straightforward realism seemed to belong to another age. It was not until New York Review of Books Classics republished the novel in 2006 that it began to be noticed.

It was historians rather than literary critics who drew attention to the novel. Antony Beevor quoted from *Life and Fate* extensively in his bestselling 1996 book *Stalingrad* — one of the many historians to recognize, as the 20th century came to a close, that no one had painted a more comprehensive picture of Stalin's Soviet Union.

The accounts of hand-to-hand fighting in besieged Stalingrad; the letter written by an elderly Jewish woman doctor about her last days in the Berdychiv ghetto; the vignettes of everyday life in an elite physics institute and in the Gulag — all are equally vivid.

Evan Gershkovich, a reporter for The Wall Street Journal newspaper has been detained in Russia on charges of espionage. Photo by DIMITAR DILKOFF/AFP via Getty Images

Now, *Life and Fate* has taken a startling new role in discussions of life under the rule of a Russian autocrat.

The American journalist Evan Gershkovich, the son of Soviet Jewish emigres, was arrested in Russia last week and charged with espionage — a move that outside observers have decried as a political hostage-taking, as Russia seeks leverage amid broad opposition to its war in Ukraine. Gershkovich's first visitor in jail reported that he was spending his time reading *Life and Fate*; a fellow reporter confirmed he'd been reading the novel, often aloud, during a March vacation.

A political prisoner reading a chronicle of life under a brutal political regime, while awaiting trial under that regime's historical successor — the resonance is grim, and clear.

Life and Fate is an encyclopedia of the complexities of life under totalitarianism, and no one has articulated better than Grossman how hard it is to withstand its pressures.

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Counting the Omer in 49 Jewish languages

Andrew Silow-Carroll, originally for the JTA

There are 49 days between the second night of Passover and the holiday of Shavuot, but who's counting?

Jews the world over, in fact, and in languages familiar and obscure.

The daily counting of the Omer is an old ritual being given new life this season by the Jewish Language Project at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. On each day of the seven-week period, the research group will post a version of the counting in a different vernacular Jewish language, from Ladino and Yiddish to less familiar languages like Judeo-Georgian and Judeo-Persian.

The multilingual Omer counter is a way to draw attention to Jewish linguistic diversity, revive interest in fading languages, and celebrate the far-flung nature of the Jewish Diaspora.

"Because of migration, nationalist language policies, and genocide, a large percentage of the languages in our Omer counter are currently endangered," write Sarah Bunin Benor, founding director of the Jewish Language Project, and Eden Moyal, its curator.

Benor is a vice provost at HUC-JIR, and Moyal is a linguistics and anthropology major at UCLA.

The Omer (or "sheaf" in Hebrew) was a harvest offering made at the Temple in Jerusalem in ancient times between the two holidays; the daily counting during home and synagogue prayers outlived the Temple as a symbol of the thematic links between Passover and Shavuot.

Although the counting is usually recited in Hebrew, the Jewish Language Project's Omer counter translates the formula into the vernacular, often a Judaized version of the local language. To nail down how different communities might have referred to the counting, Benor and Moyal consulted historical documents, scholars and native speakers — a process of historical detective work when it came to extinct languages, such as Judeo-Provençal and Judeo-Catalan.

In Judeo-Italian, for example, the 20th day of the Omer will be welcomed with, "Oggi e er ventesimo giorno der Ngomer."

The Jewish Language Project is dedicated to preserving languages whose fate is tied to the Jewish communities who spoke them. "For example, Judeo-Esfahani, Judeo-Kermani, and Lishan Didan are spoken primarily by elderly Jews who moved from Iran to Israel and the United States and [have] not passed their languages on to their children," write Benor and Moyal. "Including these languages here helps to raise awareness about them while there's still time to learn from native speakers."

The counts will be posted daily on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and archived on the Jewish Language Project's website. ■

From the Editor

This month, I give over my editor's space to Rabbi Haviva Ner-David, because nothing I could write is so important

Last Friday [April 21], renowned and beloved Israeli author Meir Shalev, was buried at Moshav Nahalal, where he was born, in 1948, the year the State of Israel was established. Shalev spoke out strongly against the current government, and back in 2019 had already predicted Netanyahu would try to turn the country into a dictatorship.

This past Friday was another funeral of another Israeli icon, poet and songwriter Yehonatan Gefen, also at Moshav Nahalal, where he was born one year before Shalev. Nahalal Junction is where my Standing Together local chapter holds our weekly anti-Occupation demonstrations each Friday, so this week, the demonstration coincided with Gefen's funeral, with the usual anti-Occupation signs (from the organization Looking the Occupation in the Eyes) in Arabic and Hebrew, but also with a sign expressing sorrow at Geffen's death for passersby, including those on their way to the funeral, to see.

Gefen had spoken out strongly in his lifetime against the occupation, and his daughter, writer and actor, Shira Geffen, was wearing at this funeral a T-shirt from Looking the Occupation in the Eyes that read, in both Arabic and Hebrew: "There is No Democracy with Occupation." She posted on Facebook this morning:

"I'm sorry I ruined my father's funeral for some. Sorry for the 'finger in the eye' [a Hebrew expression] of those who were expecting a moving and heartwarming state funeral, and that their experience was ruined because of my shirt with the 'scandalous' word — occupation. The disappointed write that in cemeteries we must "put aSIDE" political matters. So that's it, we were already on the SIDE, and we can't see from there. It's easy to ignore and repress, and when the ground is burning there are no more sides. All places are kosher for a protest, even more so the cemeteries which are filled, among other things, with the victims of the endless conflict. It's time to bring to the fore what you want us to forget, wherever possible. This was my father's way and I will do as much as I can to continue it.

Yehonatan's son, singer Aviv Gefen, sang his father's song, "A Place for Worry," which he recorded a video of two weeks before his death especially for the Memorial Day joint Palestinian-Israeli ceremony that will be held on Monday night [April 24] in Tel Aviv. Here are the [English translation of the] lyrics to the song:

At the end of the sky and at the end of the desert
There is a distant place full of wild plants.
A small, shabby and crazy place
A distant place, a place of worry.
There, they say what will happen
And think about all that has happened.
There God sits and watches
and protects everything God created.
It is forbidden to pick the garden flowers
It is forbidden to pick the garden flowers
And God worries, worries terribly.

Also in honor of Memorial Day, a woman standing next to me last night at the anti-government demonstration in Kiryat Tivon was holding a sign with a photograph of her only sibling, her brother who died in battle in the 1967 War, leaving her an only child at 15. The sign read:

Amichai, my only brother/sibling
You fell in battle in the Six Day War.
And guarding our independence and freedom in a democratic country, we continue in our battle.
You left in our hands a legacy of battle.
May your death not be in vain.

Reform Rabbi Leora Ezrachi-Vered, the spiritual leader of the Nigun HaLev congregation in the Jezreel Valley, spoke at the demonstration. She quoted from the Torah portion we will be reading this coming Shabbat, "In justice judge your fellow humans… Do not stand idly by when your neighbor's life is at stake," saying that Jews have a moral obligation, as stated in our most sacred text, to protect the basic human right of Palestinians on both sides of the Green Line, to live a life of promise and without constant fear.

There is something eerie about these two Israeli icons of the left, Shalev and Geffen, born in 1947-8, dying one week apart and being buried in the same place, just as the country's democratic character is more on the line than ever. It is as if they could not bear to see what this government is doing to the country.

May we have the strength to continue in our struggle so that Amichai's death will not be in vain, so that Shalev and Geffen will be proud of what their country becomes, and so that God can worry a little less. ■

Phone numbers, websites, and addresses of organizations frequently listed in the calendar:

Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan (AAOM): 1429 Hill Street, *248-408-3269, annarborminyan.org*

Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, *734-445-1910, aarecon.org*

Beth Israel Congregation (BIC): 2000 Washtenaw Ave, 734-665-9897, *bethisrael-aa.org*

Chabad House: 715 Hill Street, 734-995-3276, jewmich.com

Eastern Michigan University Center for Jewish Studies (EMU): www.emich.edu/jewish-studies/

Frankel Center: 202 S. Thayer St., lsa.umich.edu/judaic/

Jewish Community Center (JCC): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 745-971-0990, jccannarbor.org

Jewish Cultural Society (JCS): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-975-9872, jewishculturalsociety.org

Jewish Family Services (JFS): 2245 South State Street, 734-769-0209, jfsannarbor.org

Jewish Federation: 2939 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-677-0100, jewishannarbor.org

Pardes Hannah: 2010 Washtenaw Ave, 734-761-5324, pardeshannah.org

Temple Beth Emeth (TBE): 2309 Packard Road, 734-665-4744, templebethemeth.org

UM Hillel: 1429 Hill Street 734-769-0500, michiganhillel.org

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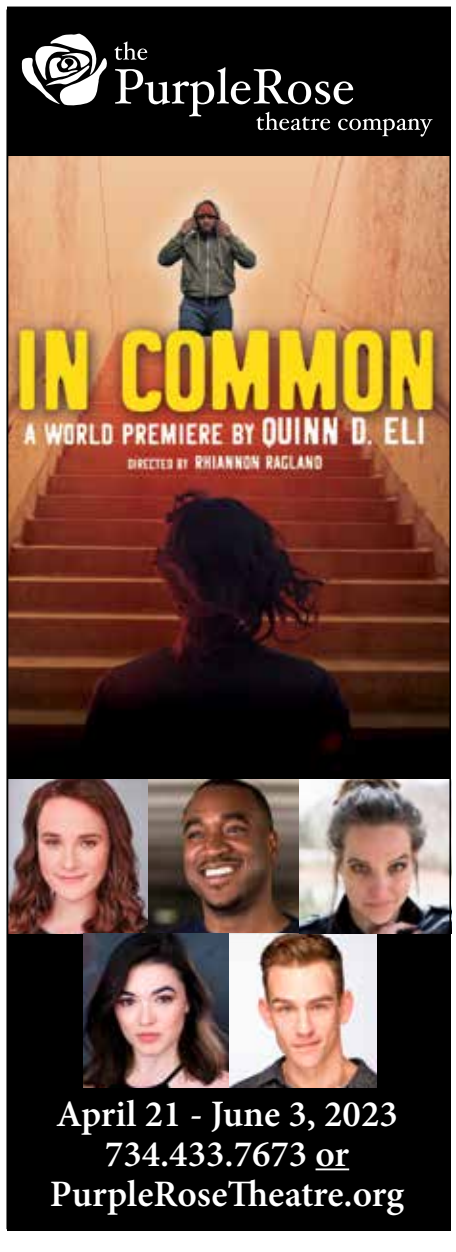

First Annual A2 Climate Teach-In

By Cathy Marshall

On May 7, people from across the Ann Arbor area will gather to learn, build community, and create momentum for action to address the climate crisis. The First Annual A2 Climate Teach-In is sponsored by eight Ann Arbor congregations and will be held at Genesis of Ann Arbor, 2309 Packard St., from 1:30–5 p.m. The theme of the Teach-In is "What Can I Do? What Can We Do Together?"

Mayor Christopher Taylor will give the keynote presentation to kick things off. He

Dr. Shelie Miller

will be introduced by Rabbi Josh Whinston of Temple Beth Emeth and Reverend Anne Clarke of St. Clare's Episcopal Church, the two clergy that represent the congregations housed in the Genesis building. The agenda then moves to six different breakout sessions, including "What and How We Eat," "Government Support to Help You Go Green," "Local Advocacy Opportunities," "A Zero Waste Lifestyle and the Circular Economy," "How Your Green Teams Can Take Action," and "Local Climate Justice." The Closing Session will be a presentation by Dr. Shelie Miller, Professor, Director, Program in the Environment; Jonathan W. Bulkley Collegiate Professor of Sustainable Systems; University of Michigan Distinguished Faculty Fellow in Sustainability. The last hour of the Teach-In is dedicated to networking. Over 15 climate-focused nonprofit organizations will staff tables to give event participants opportunities to connect and volunteer. Free vegetarian snacks will be available.

Don Levitt, a member of the Temple Beth Emeth Dayenu Circle, came up with the idea for the Teach-In as a broader next step to the "Climate Heroes" projects that also came from the Dayenu Circle. Don initially brought the eight congregations together in 2022 for the Climate Heroes Stories project, an effort to put Climate Change front and center in people's minds. Don said, "In Washtenaw County only 44% of people occasionally or more frequently talk about global warming. That means that 56% of people in Washtenaw County are *never* talking about climate change. If people are not talking about climate change, they will not take action to address climate change."

The Climate Hero Stories initiative is based on a well-established psychological principle: "People look to others who are similar to them for cues about appropriate behavior." By sharing "climate hero stories" — so people can see that others just like themselves are taking action to address climate change — we can get more people in Washtenaw County talking about and doing something about climate change. The Climate Heroes congregations have been putting on a workshop series entitled "Reducing Your Carbon Footprint" since November 2022, and the final workshop in the inaugural year will be held on May 17 on Zoom.

The first teach-in, protesting the Vietnam War, was held overnight at the University of Michigan on March 24–25, 1965. Over 3,000 people attended debates, lectures, movies, and musical events. The teach-in received national press and inspired 35 more teach-ins on college campuses within the next week. By the end of the year there had been teach-ins at 120 campuses. Antiwar teach-ins were held until the end of the war.

The 1st Annual A2 Climate Teach-In grew out of the collaborative effort that was established by the Climate Heroes congregations. Through collective action, the group has been able to reach out to more people and get more people engaged in climate action. Sponsoring congregations include Temple Beth Emeth, Beth Israel Congregation, First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, St. Clare's Episcopal Church, Zion Lutheran Church, St. Francis of Assisi Parish, First Presbyterian Church, and Blue Ocean Church.

You can find out more and register for the Teach-In at https://www.a2climateteachin.com/. More information about Climate Heroes Stories can be found at https://www.climateherostories.com/. ■

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Federation to award over one million dollars at annual meeting

By Rachel Wall, Communications and Development Manager, Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor

The Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor will be holding its Annual Meeting on Wednesday, May 31, at 7 p.m.

The Annual Meeting offers an opportunity to celebrate the past year — and there is much to celebrate. Last year, Federation's 2022 Annual Community Campaign raised a record-breaking $1.6 million for organizations that enrich Jewish life in Washtenaw County, Israel, and around the world. This was the most raised on behalf of the community since 2008. The final sum for the 2023 Campaign, as well as a breakdown of how those funds are allocated, will be announced at the Annual Meeting. Federation is excited at the prospect of meeting last year's total.

Throughout April and May, Federation's two volunteer Allocations Committees — one dedicated to local and domestic causes and one to Israel and Overseas — read proposals and heard presentations from organizations requesting funds for the 2023–2024 year. In mid-May, the Allocations Committees will make their recommendations to the Federation Board of Directors, detailing how funds raised by the 2023 Annual Community Campaign would be best distributed. The Board votes to approve those recommendations at its regularly scheduled meeting on May 15.

This year, the Allocations Committees are chaired by Jeremy Bloom (local and domestic) and Levana Aronson (Israel and Overseas). For more information on the allocations process and to see the full list of committee members, please visit jewishannarbor.org/about-us/community-impact. This is also where the allocations distributions from last year's Campaign can be reviewed, in the 2022 Annual Impact Report. The Impact Report gives an inside look at what a difference the Campaign makes on our community, with stories from real people who benefit from donors' generosity. The most recent report also features a tribute to the late Carol and Herb Amster (z"l), philanthropic pioneers in the greater Ann Arbor Jewish community.

The financial impact of the Federation would not be possible without those volunteers who give their valuable time to enrich the community. At the Annual Meeting, the community will honor those volunteers, especially the Board of Directors. At the meeting, we will thank those Board members whose terms are ending and welcome incoming members. Community members present at the meeting will vote to elect the new Board. The full slate of Board members for the upcoming term can be found at JewishAnnArbor.org.

Most of all, the Annual Meeting is an opportunity to thank all the generous donors to the 2023 Annual Community Campaign for their dedication to supporting Jewish life locally and around the world. If you have not yet made a gift or pledge to the 2023 Annual Community Campaign, there is still time before the Board votes to approve the recommendations of the Allocations Committees on May 15. Please visit JewishAnnArbor.org to make your contribution today, or contact Rachel Wall at rachel@jewishannarbor.org or (734) 773-3533.

Federation invites the entire community to join the Annual Meeting. To register, visit JewishAnnArbor.org. ■

In the land of milk and funny: Federation to explore Israel's complexities through humor for 75th anniversary

By Rachel Wall, Communications and Development Manager, Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor

To say that Israel is in a challenging time feels like a monumental understatement. And still, the fact that this year marks the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel is in itself monumental.

In collaboration with community partners, the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor is marking this occasion with an event on the evening of June 4 featuring comedians Joel Chasnoff and Benji Lovitt. The event, called "In the Land of Milk and Funny," will include cocktails, comedy, and social commentary. Chasnoff and Lovitt will explore the complexities of modern-day Israel through humor, via the book they co-wrote together, *Israel 201: Your Next-Level Guide to the Magic, Mystery, and Chaos of Life in the Holy Land*. The book gives an up-close look at the people, institutions, and traditions that make Israel the fascinating, magical, and complicated country that it is.

Since 2001, Joel Chasnoff has performed his unique brand of clean, insightful comedy at clubs, colleges, and Jewish events in 10 countries. If you've lived in the Ann Arbor area for a few years, you may remember Chasnoff from when he headlined the Federation's Main Event in the fall of 2017, with chef Einat Admony.

Chasnoff's performing partner for this summer's visit is Benji Lovitt, who made aliyah in 2006 and now combines comedic observations on Israeli society with a lifelong involvement in Jewish education. Lovitt offers insights into cultural differences as he translates both the challenges and marvels of life in Israel to diaspora Jews.

The event on June 4 will be held at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor. Before the comedy begins, there will be mingling and a variety of cocktails and mocktails for attendees to sample. There is no cost to attend this event, but registration is required. Visit JewishAnnArbor.org to secure your spot!

To learn more about Israel-related programming through the Jewish Federation, visit JewishAnnArbor.org/Engagement/Israel. ■

JFS receives grant in honor of Carol Hoffer

Melissa Goodson, Chief Development Officer for JFS

Celebrating the philanthropic work of its financial advisors, Northwestern Mutual is recognizing the individuals who have shown outstanding volunteerism and leadership through its 2023 Community Service Awards. Now in its 28th year, the awards program is distributing $270,000 to nonprofits nationwide. Ann Arbor resident Carol Hoffer, a financial advisor at Northwestern Mutual Ann Arbor, has been named a 2023 Most Exceptional Community Service Award winner, receiving a $25,000 grant for Jewish Family Services (JFS) of Washtenaw County.

"Northwestern Mutual is a company built on helping people, and it is inspiring to see the impact that these financial advisors are making on their communities through selfless contributions," said Steve Radke, president of the Northwestern Mutual Foundation. "I'm honored to work alongside these dedicated advisors who embody our company's values and commitment to the communities we serve."

JFS is a private nonprofit social services agency serving a diverse, international population since 1993. The organization is dedicated to strengthening family life, fostering self-sufficiency, and promoting improved social and economic conditions. For over 20 years, Hoffer has been devoting her time and resources toward different programs throughout JFS. Most recently, Hoffer helped JFS — the only resettlement agency in Washtenaw County — provide resettlement support to families from war-torn Ukraine.

"Carol's passion for giving back to underserved communities, as well as the unmatched energy and enthusiasm she brings each and every day, has made a lasting impact on the thousands of lives that have benefited from our services," said Anya Abramzon, CEO of JFS. "Carol's exemplary leadership and devotion to her community is an inspiration to everyone around her. On behalf of the entire JFS organization, we are so grateful to Carol and her family for their unwavering support over the years."

"My experiences as both a social worker and financial advisor offer me a unique perspective on the importance of organizations like JFS and the support it brings to members of the community," said Hoffer. "I feel incredibly grateful for the opportunity to help even more residents in Washtenaw County through this grant. The funding from the Community Service Award will be used to support JFS' resettlement program, which provides housing, nutrition, employment assistance, language access support, and transportation to humanitarian parolees and other immigrants."

Since the program's inception in 1995, the Northwestern Mutual Foundation has donated nearly $7 million to nonprofits across the country. In celebrating the volunteer work of its financial advisors, the company deepens its dedication to giving back to the communities it serves.

Learn more about Carol Hoffer and her volunteer efforts with Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County visit www.jfsannarbor.org ■

May is mental health awareness month

Caroline Butler, Director Thrive Services

Mental Health Awareness Month is a great time to prioritize your mental health and a reminder that good mental health is key to overall health. A growing number of Americans are experiencing mental health symptoms and Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County (JFS) can help. JFS' Thrive Counseling provides a positive approach to mental, emotional, and behavioral health, and provided services to over 600 clients last year.

People attend therapy for a variety of reasons, whether because of a pattern of internal pain, daily life stressors, or difficulties within their relationships. This pain can involve feelings of anxiety, sadness or depression, loneliness, grief, frustration, anger, or even adjustment to life changes. Our team of therapists are skilled, compassionate, and dedicated to providing holistic, culturally sensitive care. Our clinic is a training site for master's level professional counseling and social work students, who work in close consultation with their fully licensed supervisors, to provide high quality counseling. We offer individual counseling for adults and adolescents (aged 10–17 years old) as well as couples counseling. Counseling is offered via telehealth or in-person, depending on client preference and therapist availability. In addition to English, Thrive therapists also speak Spanish and Russian.

Members of the Thrive team are participating in several valuable training courses this year. Our team is in the process of completing training on Trauma Systems Informed Therapy for Refugees (TST-R). TST-R is both a clinical model for the efficient and effective treatment of children impacted by trauma, and an organizational model to guide the successful integration of trauma-informed, culturally responsive care into organizations' existing system of care. Additionally, through the Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies, Thrive therapists attended training on the SPACE (Supportive Parenting for Anxious Childhood Emotions) model, which is a program to address anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorder, and related problems in children and adolescents. SPACE therapy sessions are attended by parents only, who are given evidence-based strategies and specific plans for how to better support their children. SPACE helps parents to be more supportive and less accommodating through an eight-component intervention. We are excited to offer these interventions at Thrive Counseling!

To access Thrive Counseling, you can request services online using the following link, or call 734-436-4249 to complete a brief screening over the phone. thrivecounselinga2.com ■

Lived experience: A conversation with Michal Raucher on reproductive justice

By Meg Bernstein

Michal Raucher is an associate professor of Jewish Studies and the undergraduate director for the department at Rutgers University. She holds a PhD from Northwestern in Religious Studies, as well as a master's degree in Bioethics from the University of Pennsylvania. In 2020, Dr. Raucher published a book on her ethnographic studies in reproductive choices among Haredi women in Israel. In addition, she has published dozens of articles, essays, blog posts, and op-eds addressing reproductive issues and medical ethics from a Jewish perspective. She is currently working on a new book about Orthodox women rabbis that she hopes to publish

in 2024. Before that, Dr. Raucher will launch a large-scale research project to collect more information on Jews who have had abortions; this will take the form of a website with a detailed survey for Jews who have had abortions to share their stories and reasons, along with an option to participate in a more personal interview. She is hoping this research will shed light on the complex reasons why Jewish people have abortions, so that the community can use that information to find a better way of talking about this issue, one that honors the myriad experiences of lived Judaism.

Recently, Dr. Raucher published an article the inaugural issue of Masorti: The New Journal of Conservative Judaism. This article, titled "From Justification to Justice: Calling for a New Conservative Movement Position on Abortion," tackles the Conservative movement's past teshuvot, or formal halachic positions, on abortion. Raucher argues that these teshuvot are inherently ethically flawed as they are based on a justification framework that assumes abortion is always morally incorrect but allowable in certain circumstances. This approach ignores the lived experiences of those who become pregnant and have abortions, including the complex and careful reasoning that goes into making this decision. It perpetuates the shame surrounding abortion experiences and devalues the folks who make these choices for reasons that do not fall within the moral framework. She questions the use of textually based arguments from Torah and Talmud, as well as later rabbinic writings, as many of the sources do not seem to directly address abortion, nor do they consider women as more than merely objects in a legal context. An ethical approach to abortion, and the one she hopes to see the Rabbinical Assembly eventually take, she writes, should "center the lived experiences of Jews who have terminated pregnancies."

Raucher was a guest speaker at Eastern Michigan University center for Jewish Studies on March 13, and I interviewed her after her presentation.

Meg Bernstein: Tell me a little bit about your Jewish background and how you came to be doing the work you are currently doing.

Michal Raucher: I grew up as a Conservative Jew in an observant family. I went to Schechter schools through 8th grade, and then I went to a public high school. When I went to college, I was at JTS [the Jewish Theological Seminary] and Columbia, where I studied Hebrew bible and religion. In college, I was interested in journalism and medicine, but I ended up focusing on religion and medical ethics. I did a masters at Penn in bioethics. I was very motivated by ethical questions, looking at the anthropological perspective of how people make what they consider to be ethical decisions — a more local, individual understanding of ethics when it came to medical decisions. I continued studying religion and ethics at Northwestern with a focus on women's and gender studies, anthropology, and Jewish studies. All of these subjects came together with my particular interest in reproduction.

Meg: At first that seems kind of all over the place — it's quite a lot! — but it really comes together in a way that makes sense and fuels a lot of your research. So, can you talk a little bit about what you learned from your ethnographic research among Haredi women concerning reproductive ethics?

Michal: If you were to look at the field of Jewish medical ethics 15 years ago, you would find it was dominated by rabbis or people with specializations in rabbinic law basically saying what is halachically permissible is ethically permissible and equating those two. And I was really frustrated by that! I knew from my own background as well as just from being a Jew in the world that Judaism is a lived religion. Even people who proclaim to be [very halachic] have adaptations and personal understandings of halacha, so I wanted to know where halacha fit into an individual's decision making around medical issues. So, I did my research on-site in Israel with Haredi, ultra-Orthodox women who were making medical decisions. I focused on reproduction because in Israel in the early 2000s there was this explosion of interest in how pronatalism was affecting Jewish Israelis' access to or use of reproductive technology. I ended up interviewing about 25 women multiple times over the course of their pregnancies, going to doctor appointments with them, observing them in prenatal classes. I interviewed doctors, nurses, doulas, and midwives. I also spent some time with an anti-abortion group doing participant observation. What was really surprising to me was that after a few pregnancies, [these women] felt like they didn't need to go to their rabbi anymore because they felt like their rabbis no longer had authority over their pregnancies, that they now had the authority for themselves.

Meg: So you talk about this a little bit in your recent article for Masorti, but can you explain the difference between abortion rights and reproductive freedom?

Michal: The movement for reproductive justice was so named in 1994 by 12 Black women who had been advocating for a wider understanding of reproductive health rights and justice. For decades there had been an understanding that attention to abortion rights was limited to particularly white women who felt like their rights could be supported by the government. And the fight for abortion rights ignored the fact that for generations Black women and other women of color had been forcibly sterilized. So, what these women wanted was not just the right to an abortion but the right to have children. And the right to make reproductive decisions that also included raising children in healthy, safe environments. Reproductive justice turns attention toward the ability to access abortion, contraception, sexual education, good maternal and fetal healthcare. It's not just about rights — you have to be able to access those things. What good is the right to abortion when there's no clinic in your state? So, with a reproductive justice lens we can see that bigger picture instead of just focusing on abortion.

Meg: So why isn't textual evidence for the support of abortion in Jewish law satisfactory? And is it valuable for us to explore these textual sources at all in this area?

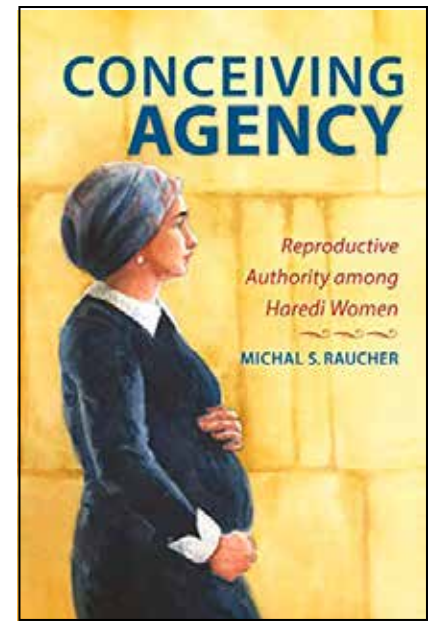
Michal: Well first, the texts we have been using are not actually supportive of abortion. The texts that we have been using support a justification framework for abortion which means that certain abortions are permissible and other abortions are not. That approach is ethically problematic. It's not based on autonomy of any individual person. They require somebody justify their abortion, overlooking an individual's choice. The situations under which an individual could be permitted to have an abortion under the justification framework are very limited, so [the textual approach] only supports abortion in 25% of cases. A justification approach starts from the assumption that abortion is wrong except in certain circumstances, and I don't believe that's advocating for abortion. Advocating for abortion — as in "abortion is healthcare" or "abortion is a right" — it's neutral. But the justification framework proffers a value judgment. Another reason why I think the textual approaches are insufficient have to do with a feminist critique. The halachic system is patriarchal, written by men and intended by men, not taking into account women's experiences. A feminist approach demands that issues that predominately relate to women should not be dominated by men's perspectives.

Meg: You said in an article published in the Jewish Standard that 62% of folks who have had abortions identify as religious, and I take that to mean all faiths. If they aren't looking for textual or religious law to support these choices, how else does their religious affiliation or observance factor into this decision?

Michal: So, of that 62%, 54% were Christian, so the majority of our data is coming from Christians. And in that data what we're seeing is that a few things happen. Among people who are having abortions, [some] end up feeling like they're committing a sin. Other times, they think about religion differently. They are thinking, "I'm not gonna tell my pastor or rabbi; I'm not going to tell my mother who is very religious because she would not approve, but I believe God would support my choice." They've developed a more personalized understanding of God, an understanding that's more justice oriented. They're seeing that God understands the reasons they're having abortions in a way that they think people wouldn't understand. Religion doesn't mean text for everybody. Religion doesn't mean religious leaders. The way they've come to understand God is a central piece of their religious feelings around abortion. So many people are having abortions because they can't afford a child or because they're not in a place to raise one for any number of reasons, and they're like, "God wouldn't want me to have a child right now. God wants more for me here. God doesn't want this child to suffer because they don't have enough." Justice oriented, not dogmatic issues that are very situational. What we know is that people, when they're thinking about whether they should have an abortion, the question is not abstract. It's not "is abortion okay." And that's part of the problem with some of these religious ruminations on abortion.

Meg: You mentioned in your Masorti article the lack of ritual around abortion. Can you tell me what you learned about that and what you think is a stumbling block to including this experience in ritual life?

Michal: There are a handful of abortion rituals that have been developed over the last few years, kind of reimagining ritual and feminist innovation. But I don't know how frequently those rituals are being used. About a year ago a good friend of mine had an abortion and asked me to put together a ritual, and when I was doing the research, it was very hard to find information. I also found that there was a lot of emotion assumed in the rituals [that I did find], whether it was grief or relief or whatever. But there's nothing formal at synagogue — although there could be, but they require that one feel comfortable enough in their congregation to tell their rabbi and then tell their community. There's a lot of talk about children and having children in Jewish spaces, and I think people see abortion as contrary to that. We have a community that is so invested in women's reproductive experiences if they yield live children, and then if they don't, we have such secrecy and shame around it. I think we still just have a lot of stigma in Jewish communities around abortion. ■



Joyful Jewish Jams rousing success

By Katie Beasley-Sriro, JCLP Program Manager and Abby Calef, JCLP Class of 2023

On Monday, March 27, nearly 200 members of the local Washtenaw and Detroit communities and beyond came together to celebrate resilience, connectedness, and joy at the iconic Ark listening room on Main Street. Musicians Batya Levine and Aly Halpert, along with ensemble musician Samuel Weisenberg, brought the house down with toe-tapping nigunim (wordless melodies), upbeat folk, and beautiful piano ballads, all inspired by Jewish ritual, culture, and peoplehood.

This free concert was spearheaded by the second-year students of the Jewish Communal Leadership Program (JCLP), a cohort for emerging leaders in the University of Michigan Master of Social Work program and the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies who are committed to helping Jewish communities meet 21st-century challenges, all while addressing broader societal concerns.

While previously this annual event used the format of a conversation with a panel of speakers, this year the students chose to incorporate a concert as the main event to involve community members in a more inclusive, immersive, and fun way. Planning the event took an entire year, as a communal concert was not something that the JCLP cohorts had previously done, and while many students have Jewish programming experience, none of them had planned something this large in the music scene.

"We did not know how early to book the venues or artists, or how to enter music spaces as we looked for co-sponsorship and partnerships. One of the coolest parts was that what we had planned as a way to invite the community into an accessible-for-all-ages event was met with an equal level of excitement to help out. There were so many organizations and people outside of whom the JCLP program normally reached out to who stepped up to help us make this mission possible," says Elana Lambert, JCLP class of 2023.

The communal concert and conversation event was designed with the goal of bridging gaps through music, yet the challenge of building an intergenerational space was in part sparked by the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor's event on antisemitism that occurred earlier this year. JCLP students were curious about the depth that different generational stories bring to the table in one conversation.

Unbeknownst to the JCLP students, it seemed that music bridged gaps between young parents and their infants, students, and teachers from Ann Arbor's Hebrew Day School, U-M faculty and staff, and retired community members alike, Jews, non-Jews, and as Lydia Greenberg stated in her speech "or those who are not sure." In singing, humming and swaying along to the melodies of the musicians, everyone seemed to fit into the community. Ann Arbor local, Dr. Elizabeth Wierba said, "I especially liked the beautiful harmonies and how meditative the music felt … It made me feel like part of the community, which I had really missed during COVID. I was ya-da-dai-dai-ing for a long time after." Rabbi Will Keller, HDS head of school, says, "Aly and Batya's concert was exactly what our community needed. I am so grateful to JCLP for organizing this incredible event. Not only were the Jewish jams joyful but our souls were refreshed as they sang and called out."

Lydia Greenberg and Abby Calef

One of the artists, Aly Halpert, is an Ann Arbor native whose family members were in attendance. "On a personal note, it's always special to play a show in my hometown, and especially to be at The Ark where I saw so many musicians I looked up to throughout my childhood," said Halpert in an interview with the *Detroit Jewish News*. The JCLP students noted that watching the concert come to life showed them just how much the artists fit their vision for the evening, "Aly, Batya, and Sam's music fit the tone of our concert perfectly and embodied what it means to be joyful and Jewish. I think I can speak for the 2023 cohort when I say that we were nervous when the big day came, but it turned out better than we could have imagined," says Caroline Strauss, JCLP class of 2023.

Joyful Jewish Jams was made possible through the grassroots funding of over 40 individual community members, as well as several generous community sponsors: the Jean and Samuel Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, University of Michigan Hillel, Beth Israel Congregation of Ann Arbor, the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation, The Well Detroit, CultureVerse, Zingerman's, the University of Michigan School of Social Work Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and SSW Student Union. ■

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Jewish Federation awards third round of Community Engagement Fund grants

By Federation Staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor is delighted to announce the allocation of five Community Engagement Fund grants awarded to local initiatives with the goal of promoting cross-organizational collaboration and innovation in the local Jewish community. A grant selection committee, comprised of community volunteers, evaluated proposals against the fund's principles of cross-communal collaboration, creativity and innovation, and joy and connectivity.

Recovery Seder

The Recovery Seder, which took place April 8, was a partnership between Temple Beth Emeth (TBE), Beth Israel Congregation (BIC), Jewish Family Services (JFS), and the Lior Project — a community effort led by JFS to address issues of mental health and addiction in the Jewish community. This community seder was geared toward meeting the spiritual and religious needs of members of the recovery and 12-step community. It enabled participants to navigate aspects of the ceremony that can be more challenging and to explore what freedom at this season means to someone who is struggling with freeing themselves from addiction.

"For those in the Jewish community less familiar with recovery, this was an opportunity to educate, to reduce stigma, and to highlight the vibrant recovery community in Washtenaw County and Southeast Michigan," said Sam Stenson, who has been running private versions of the Recovery Seder with co-organizer Hugh Goodman for 14 years. The program attracted almost 60 participants, well over anticipated numbers.

"The feedback we've gotten is that the atmosphere was relaxed and the experience joyful," said Stenson. For those in recovery, it was "a chance to contemplate our own personal stories of freedom from the bondage that comes with an active substance abuse or other addictive disorder."

Ruth Messinger Presentation

Former Executive Director of the American Jewish World Service Ruth Messinger was invited to speak at a program to benefit the Irene Butter Fund for Holocaust and Human Rights Education. Spearheaded by the Temple Beth Emeth Generations After group, this project evolved into a true community collaboration including TBE, University of Michigan Hillel, Beth Israel Congregation, and the Jewish Communal Leadership Program at the U-M School of Social Work.

Messinger's keynote address took place at TBE on April 15. During her visit, she spoke with students on the U-M campus and gave a d'var Torah at Beth Israel. "This event and the partnerships it spawned is an example of what the Community Engagement Fund is about," said Federation executive director Eileen Freed. "The organizers engaged with other communal entities to ensure that a speaker of Ruth's caliber would be available to a wide range of audiences. Additionally, support of this program enhances the Irene Butter Fund, which will provide community Holocaust and human rights education well into the future."

Israel@75 Community Celebration

In partnership with the JCC, Hebrew Day School, BIC, TBE, Chabad, and Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan, the Jewish Federation is coordinating a community-wide celebration marking Israel's 75th year as an independent state. On June 4, the community will gather for "The Land of Milk & Funny: A Night of Cocktails and Comedy" with comedians Joel Chasnoff and Benji Lovitt. Joel and Benji recently teamed up to write *Israel 201: Your Next-Level Guide to the Magic, Mystery, and Chaos of Life in the Holy Land* and will share their wit, wisdom, and social commentary in honor of this historic occasion.

Supportive Parenting for Anxious Childhood Emotions (SPACE)

Mental health challenges in children, adolescents, and young adults are real and widespread, and the Jewish community is not immune. Jewish Family Services, in partnership with Hebrew Day School and community congregations, and with support from the national Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies, will train two JFS therapists in an innovative therapy model called SPACE. The trainers will customize the SPACE intervention to local needs and conduct the program for parents of children at Hebrew Day School, congregational religious schools, and others in the local Jewish community.

Unexpected Gifts: A Convening on Jewish Education in Honor of Harlene Appelman z"l

The University of Michigan School of Social Work's Jewish Communal Leadership Program, in collaboration with EMU Center for Jewish Studies, U-M Hillel, and Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor, is planning a gathering of outstanding educators, artists, and musicians to explore possibilities in Jewish education as practiced in the U.S. today. This program will take place October 15 and is in honor of Ann Arbor-based national Jewish education pioneer and leader, Harlene Appelman z"l. Educators and community leaders from Southeast Michigan will reflect upon Harlene's understanding that education is a vital and joyful part of Jewish life — creating openings and avenues for children and adults to see themselves as part of the large frames of Jewish tradition and community.

The Community Engagement Fund is supported by the Jewish Federation's Annual Community Campaign to encourage organizations and individuals to work collaboratively on new, innovative initiatives to cultivate a strong, engaged, connected, caring, vibrant, and enduring Jewish community in Washtenaw County.

The next round of Community Engagement Grants takes place this summer. Grant requests of up to $5,000 will be considered and must be submitted by a formal or informal partnership of three or more collaborators. The deadline for this grant application is June 30. Applicants are asked to submit a letter of intent by June 12 to McKenzie Katz (mckenzie@jewishannarbor.org). Decisions will be made within one month of the grant deadline.

More information and an application for submission is available at www.jewishannarbor.org. For more information or to inquire, contact McKenzie Katz at mckenzie@jewishannarbor.org or 734-585-5405 ■

Community study of Jewish Washtenaw County update and next steps

By Eileen Freed, Executive Director Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor

Recognizing the need for valid and actionable data that serves the entire community, the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, in partnership with local Jewish communal organizations and congregations, has undertaken a study of the Washtenaw County Jewish community.

This study is being conducted by an experienced research team at the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University and NORC at the University of Chicago. The Community Study Implementation Committee is chaired by volunteers Barry Nemon and Randy Milgrom and comprised representatives from Jewish communal organizations and congregations, as well as content experts.

The data collection process took place from November 2022 through January 2023. Data collection was conducted through surveys, which were mailed to households throughout Washtenaw County. The sample who received the surveys comprised households known to local Jewish communal organizations and congregations. In addition, the sample included randomly selected households using address-based sampling and other research methods.

The researchers' goal was to collect 750 surveys; This data collection goal was significantly exceeded, with almost 1,000 surveys completed. Based on the data, Brandeis and NORC delivered an initial "top-line report" to the committee in late April, with further data analysis currently being conducted.

Federation Board President Decky Alexander notes the significance of the effort's success thus far. "The Community Study is an important start to discovering and/or rediscovering the backgrounds, beliefs, values, and priorities of Jewish individuals in Washtenaw County," she says.

The Implementation Committee is turning its attention to ensuring the study is well communicated and used strategically for community planning. Three working groups — data analysis, communications, and strategic planning — have been assembled. They include organizational representatives and content experts. In the coming months, these dedicated volunteers and professionals will review the data and work with the researchers to produce a final report, develop a communications strategy for sharing the results and engaging the community, and initiate an actionable strategic planning process.

The aim is to publicize study findings through community meetings and other communications in the fall of 2023. The findings will be utilized to identify what issues/concerns need to be explored more deeply and to set communal priorities and actions. Board president Alexander emphasizes that the next steps are a necessary continuation of the process started by the study. "As with other communities across the U.S. who have engaged in data-driven planning, I hope that the study gives us, if not a road map, a light on how to best engage, serve, and support each other now and in the future," she says.

The Jewish Community Study of Washtenaw County is made possible by collaboration of all local Jewish communal organizations, with financial support from the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, the Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Ann Arbor, the JCC of Greater Ann Arbor, Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County, Temple Beth Emeth, Beth Israel Congregation, Jewish Federations of North America, and the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation.

For more information about this study, please visit www.jewishannarbor.org/communitystudy/ or contact Eileen Freed, eileenfreed@jewishannarbor.org, 734-773-3537. ■

Federation welcomes Ariella Hoffman-Peterson to professional team

By Rachel Wall, Communications and Development Manager, Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor

The Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor is thrilled to welcome Ariella Hoffman-Peterson to its professional team as Jewish Young Professionals (JYP) Coordinator. Ariella started in this role in March of this year.

Ariella is a current PhD Student in the School of Public Health at the University of Michigan. She is a lifelong Jewish communal lay leader and has loved serving on the JYP Board since moving to Ann Arbor in 2021. She is excited to continue supporting and growing this special community in the additional role of JYP Coordinator.

"JYP has been my home community since moving to Ann Arbor almost two years ago," Ariella says. "I love celebrating holidays and Shabbat dinners in special ways with other Jewish young professionals in the Ann Arbor area. I am excited to be able to contribute to this community as a new member of Federation's professional team."

Ariella's work will enhance her volunteer time as President of the JYP Board, allowing her to offer more resources for activities aimed at young professionals, and to strengthen the bond between JYP participants and the Jewish community in Washtenaw County more broadly.

Though Judaism is her main hobby, Ariella also loves comedy specials, traveling, and spending time with her partner, Nadav, and their sweet (and sometimes spicy!) cat, Stella.

To learn more about the Federation's entire professional team, visit JewishAnnArbor.org. ■

What has been lost in Bakhmut?

By Shifra Epstein, In memory of Daniel Stieber (Sztyber), z'l, a 35-year-old Jew from Warsaw, Poland, who had volunteered to serve in the Ukrainian Army. Stieber was killed on December 11, 2022, near the city of Bakhmut and was buried in Warsaw in a military ceremony.

Over the past eight months, the city of Bakhmut, also known as Artemivsk, located in the Donbas (Kharkiv) region of Eastern Ukraine, has been brutally demolished.

While Jews around the world were preparing for Passover, Russian soldiers together with fighters of the Mercenary Wagner Group have raked by constant gunfire and explosions the homes of the 70,000 residents of the city, including the 50 members of the Jewish community. The majority among the Jews and non-Jewish residents have left the city.

Unfortunately, due to the circumstances, the remaining Jews of Bakhmut were unable to enjoy the matzot delivered to them by Operation Tank of the Jewish Federation of Ukraine.

According to Dubrov, almost all the houses in which Jews lived have been destroyed. The Jews left for Germany, Israel, Kyiv, Dnipro, and Uzhhorod. Some people who left were wounded. There were also two women, a mother and daughter, who absolutely refused to leave, but Durov says he has had no contact with them.

Dubrov himself left Bakhmut, with his wife and daughter, for Germany on March 2022.

The Jewish community in Bakhmut dates to at least 1799, when 103 Jews (9.8% of the total population) lived there. By 1847 this number rose to 496, and in 1863 there were 1,560 in the community.

In the early 20th century, the Jews of Bakhmut were pioneers in many branches of industry and business, bringing commerce to this previously undeveloped territory and actively working in skilled trades and new professions, including pharmacology, medicine, publishing, photography, art, and education. Jewish owned businesses were behind the launch of the mining industry in this region of Ukraine.

During the turbulent years before and after the Soviet Revolution, Jews were prominent among both the bourgeoisie and the revolutionaries of Bakhmut. Between 1924 and 2016, Bakhmut was called Artemivsk, in honor of a Ukrainian communist leader called Fyodor Andreyevich Sergeyev, better known as Comrade Artem. Jews took an active part in all structures of the communist government, but also were victims of the Red Terror.

When the Nazi invasion began in late 1941, Artemivsk was home to 5,300 Jews, constituting nearly 10% of the total population. Two-thirds of the Jewish community were drafted into the Red Army or were evacuated.

Today, with no end in sight, Russian's war on Ukraine has been razing to the ground two centuries of local Jewish heritage in the city — a Jewish community that endured the Kozaks, the Soviet regime, Nazi massacres, and the pro-Russian 2014 Separatists.

In an interview to Haaretz Newspaper on January 5, Dubrov told the paper that the Russians with the fighters of the Mercenary Wagner Group have already razed the most beloved Jewish building in the city, the Choral Synagogue. Built in 1863 the Choral Synagogue became the architectural gem of the city, best reflecting the modernity and openness of the Jewish community of Bakhmut. Choral Synagogues, popular in many large cities in Europe, were known for their architecture, their choirs, and their liberal attitudes.

In 1923 the Choral Synagogue was appropriated by the Soviet regime and was no longer an active synagogue. The building of the Choral Synagogue had survived both the civil war and World War II. Most recently it has been used as an office building. Still, Jews of Bakhmut continued to be proud of the building and visited it frequently.

But what has happened to the Wall of Sorrow, which was inaugurated on January 12, 1999, some 48 years after the killing of more than 3,000 Jews of Bakhmut during WWII?

The Wall of Sorrow was built on the premises of the Crimean Sparkling Winery on the outskirts of Bakhmut. The winery was erected

in a mine shaft where the mass murder of thousands of Jews took place. The memorial was a collaboration among the local authorities, the Artemovsk Sparkling Wine Vinery, and Chesed Zikaron, "Kindness Memory," a local Jewish charitable center.

In the center of the Wall of Sorrow are three figurines coming out of a wall. Under the images are a Star of David and two inscriptions in Hebrew and Russian. The Hebrew inscription is a quote from the Book of Jeremiah (31:14) "A voice is heard on high, lamentation, bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children, she refuses to be comforted."

The Russian inscription below the Wall of Sorry reads: "May the Lord remember the souls of the Jews of Artemovsk! Amen."

A Russian-language plaque attached to the memorial wall tells the story of the Holocaust in Bakhmut: "Here, during the temporary German-Fascist occupation, on January 5–9, 1942, more than 3,000 Soviet civilians were brutally murdered. The residents of Artemovsk will never forget this unprecedented atrocity by the Fascist occupiers. May the glory of you — the innocent victims of fascism — live on forever."

During regular times, commemorative ceremonies, often with witnesses and victims' relatives, are held on the premises. As far as we know, the Wall of Sorrow is still intact. However, the last commemorative ceremony was held by the Bakhmut Municipal Council on January 11, 2022, just one and a half months before Russia's full-scale invasion.

During the war, the Vinery of Sparkling Wine Bakhmut has been closed, though sometimes used as a shelter for the local community.

To find out more about the Jews in the city of Bakhmut, see: *Shtetl Bakhmut: The Phenomenon of the Jewish People in the Donbas* (2013), by the historians Serhiy Tatarynov and Stanislav Fedotov.

While in Ann Arbor, imagining the Jews of Bakhmut in the past and the present, I find solace and in reciting the poem "The War Will End," written by the Palestinian national poet Mahmoud Darwish (1941–2008)

The war will end, and leaders will shake hands.
That old woman will keep waiting for her martyred son.

And those children will keep waiting for their heroic father.
I don't know who sold our homeland, but I know who paid the price ■

Evan Gershkovich continued from page 1

Take the scene in which Grossman describes his alter ego, the physicist Viktor Shtrum, wrestling with his conscience, wondering whether or not to yield to the authorities' demand that he put his name to a mendacious letter protesting against foreign criticisms of Soviet repression:

"But an invisible force was crushing him. He could feel its weight, its hypnotic power; it was forcing him to think as it wanted, to write as it dictated. This force was inside him; it could dissolve his will and cause his heart to stop beating … Only people who have never felt such a force themselves can be surprised that others submit to it. Those who have felt it, on the other hand, feel astonished that a man can rebel against it even for a moment — with one sudden word of anger, one timid gesture of protest."

With totalitarian regimes growing increasingly powerful in every continent, it is no surprise that Grossman's work should seem crucial to all who attempt to withstand them.

This is particularly true given the clarity with which Grossman, both in *Life and Fate* and in its equally great prequel, *Stalingrad*, repeatedly shows that there are no situations in which moral choice is impossible. The key such scene is when the eccentric Ikonnikov, imprisoned in Auschwitz, chooses to be shot rather than work on what will be the foundations for a gas chamber. Shortly before making that choice, Ikonnikov turns to an Italian priest, a fellow prisoner, and asks, in a prisoners' lingua franca, "Que dois-je faire, mio padre, nous travaillons dans una Vernichtungslager." ("What should I do, my father? We are working in a death camp.")

During the last 10 years, I have had two memorable conversations about Grossman. One was with the late Arseny Roginsky, a Russian Jew and founding member of the Russian historical and civil rights organization Memorial. During a conference in Cambridge, I went up to him and introduced myself as Grossman's main English translator. Roginsky took me by the hand, gave me the warmest of smiles and said, "Ah, nash pisatel!" ("Ah, our writer!")

This made me both happy and sad. I was glad that he valued Grossman, but by that time Russian society as a whole had already fallen for Vladimir Putin's seductions. If for Roginksy and his fellows, Grossman was "our writer," it was all too clear that most Russians would see him as alien. And, in fact, while Grossman's work is available in Russia, it is little read. His writing is more widely read in almost every other European country.

The other conversation that has stayed with me was with Irina Sherbakova, another important member of Memorial, and another Russian Jew. We talked about one of Grossman's last masterpieces, "Mama," a short story based on the true story of a five-year-old girl adopted in the mid-1930s by Nikolay Yezhov and his wife, Yevgenia Solomonovna.

Yezhov was head of the NKVD security police at the height of the Great Terror, from September 1936 until November 1938. During this period he was responsible for about half of the Soviet political, military and intellectual elite being imprisoned or shot; he was also responsible for the deaths of 380,000 peasants and 250,000 members of national minorities. The most prominent Soviet politicians, including Stalin himself, used to visit the Yezhovs.

In "Mama," Grossman leads us into the darkest of worlds, but he shows it to us from a perspective of peculiar innocence. We see these figures only through the eyes of the little girl and her peasant nanny. Knowing nothing of what is happening in the country, the nanny feels pity for Yezhov, thinking that his eyes look "lost, confused and pathetic."

This story is remarkable in itself, but what Sherbakova told me she found most striking about it was Grossman's prescience. The tragedy of post-Soviet Russia is that no one is held responsible for the horrors of Stalinism. People talk of state-induced famine and mass executions as though they were some strange natural disaster. No one was a perpetrator; everyone was a victim.

This lack of accountability for the past leads directly to the tragedies of the present day: Only a minority of the population feel it their duty to find out the truth about Russia's war against Ukraine — and to join the few who are protesting against it."

Natalya Khaiutina, Yezhov's real-life adopted daughter, loved Yezhov. By all accounts, he was indeed a kind father to her. And so, throughout the 1990s and 2000s, she repeatedly petitioned for his official "rehabilitation." Like many senior NKVD officials, he had, in the end, been shot as "an enemy of the people." Natalya saw Yezhov not as an executioner, a Soviet Himmler, but as a victim.

During World War II, Grossman was one of the three most popular war correspondents. He wrote for the military newspaper *RedStar*, and his articles were read by millions. He was exceptionally courageous, spending far longer in besieged Stalingrad than any other journalist. His articles were measured and — within the parameters imposed by military censorship — remarkably truthful.

He never ceased to value clarity and simplicity, but he refined his style over time. He began as a straightforward journalist but came to write more and more poetically over the years, without ever abandoning his commitment to truth. The short novel *Everything Flows* and the short stories he wrote during his last three years are no less great than *Life and Fate*; they stand to *Life and Fate* much as Dmitri Shostakovich's dark, elliptical quartets stand to his grand symphonies.

During the last two years, two British war correspondents have told me that they were reading *Life and Fate* while reporting from Ukraine. It is no surprise to me that Evan Gershkovich should be reading *Life and Fate* now. Grossman deserves to be proclaimed the patron saint of journalists. He wanted his work to be not like jewelry but like people's "daily bread." He would be glad to know that it is of some help to Gershkovich in his ordeals. ■

Music builds community at AARC

By Emily Eisbruch and Carol Lessure, special to the WJN

When over 20 members of the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC) met up at the Ark for the recent Joyful Jewish Jams concert, it brought to mind the many ways that music serves as a pillar of the congregation. In the past, the congregation has presented an online concert featuring Joey Weisenberg of Hadar's Rising Song Institute, a musical workshop

with the Maxwell Street Klezmer Band, and a performance by Jewish gospel singer Joshua Nelson. In addition, there's an impressive tradition of AARC members sharing their own vocal and instrumental talents at AARC services and celebrations.

"Music is a powerful way to express joy, sorrow, and reach the transpersonal," comments Debbie Gombert, co-chair of the AARC board and Associate Professor of Music Therapy at Eastern Michigan University. "At AARC, it is an important part of how we create community — both during services and socially. It connects us to each other, our heritage, and our culture."

The centrality of music in the AARC community was brought home at a March 18 Havdalah and music evening hosted by

Paul Resnick, a longtime musical contributor. Paul played his bass for the occasion, Seth Kopold accompanied on drums, and guitarist Laurie White shared her song leading talents. A group of AARC friends joined to sing Jewish songs like "Hine Ma Tov" and folk favorites too. A silly rendition of "Row Row Row Your Boat," with one word dropped for every repeated verse, brought smiles (and perhaps memories of camp for some).

Over the past year, a group of congregant singers formed the "Davening Team" to add continuity of music and spirit to AARC worship services. According to one of the group leaders, Etta Heisler, the Davening Team anchors the service and creates enough space for anyone — whether they know the melodies, can carry a tune, or not — to lift their voice and sing in communal prayer without feeling alone or self-conscious.

Another example of music within the AARC is an awesome band that has played at services and special gatherings over the years. AARC services include musical accompaniment such a guitar, drum, and harp playing by service leaders, and piano, viola, and cello solos by congregants at high holiday services.

At the March 27 Joyful Jewish Jams concert, some of the songs were new to the AARC members in attendance, and others (such as "We Rise" and "Loosen") had a lovely familiarity, having been introduced at services the past few years. The concert featured Jewish folk artists Batya Levine, Aly Halpert (who grew up here in Ann Arbor), and Sam Weisenberg. The AARC was a co-sponsor of the concert, which was presented by the University of Michigan School of Social Work's Jewish Communal Leadership Program. "Singing along with Batya Levine and AARC friends at the Joyful Jewish Jams concert was so amazing after singing her songs with the Davening Team at High Holidays," says Idelle Hammond-Sass. "I got to know a few more members through this connection as well as renewing connections with old friends."

The AARC is a warm, inclusive, and music-loving community of people who want to practice and study Judaism — or simply be around people who share a commitment to Judaism's values. You are invited to visit https://aarecon.org/ to learn more about the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation. ■

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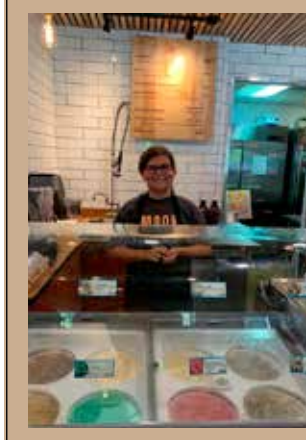

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Building a more secure Jewish community in Washtenaw County

By Glenn Levine

The author is a volunteer member of the Community Security Executive Committee for the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor. The views expressed here are his own.

We are aware of threats to Jews throughout the United States, and a growing sense of disquiet seems to have become a feature of Jewish life. While we know what has already happened, preparing for what may occur is distressing for us and problematic for the local police on whom we rely. We appreciate the work of organizations like the FBI and Anti-Defamation League in monitoring anti-Jewish actors, but our sense of repose remains disturbed nonetheless. Can we do something complementary on our own? Should we? What might we do locally, among ourselves, for ourselves, to secure our peace of mind?

The following suggestions are directed to the Jewish community, but they are really for everyone. This should be self-evident because biblical authority (Exodus 19:18) commands us to love our neighbors as ourselves (*ve'ahavta le'reyakha kamokha).* We all share a common future, thus reference to "the Jewish community" should be understood to apply to everyone. As individuals, as families, and as a whole community, we can improve our well-being, ties, and resiliency through a dedication to more human-to-human connections within the Jewish community and beyond.

Here are eight suggestions that can prepare individuals, families, and organizations for foreseeable dangers while also adding to everyone's quality of life. Each amplifies the rabbinic teachings of *ahavat Israel* (to manifest love and respect for one's fellow Jew), and *pikuach nefesh* (the command to preserve life).

First, ***Let's have coffee***. There are about 240 people serving on governing boards of the 26 or so Jewish organizations in Washtenaw County. If each board member devotes just a bit of time each month to nurture a single, new one-to-one connection with someone in their organization's orbit — getting to know people they do not really know yet — in a year we would have a human fabric of 2,880 strengthened individual ties. The goal is to broaden the quality and variety of personal relationships by asking a simple question: "Can I call this person to get a cup of coffee?" The relationship is unlikely to help anyone in a high-distress situation if the answer is "not yet" or "with hesitation." There is a better chance that those two people can help one another in the face of emergent problems when they can confidently answer "yes." These actions are more than utilitarian: they manifest *ahavat Israel* in the world, energizing each other with a friendliness that can develop into a friendship. Five years on, after more than 14,000 one-to-one heart-to-hearts, we will probably conclude that our time investing in each other's company was well spent.

Second, ***Get our kids together***. Each Jewish organization should take turns hosting inter-congregational skill-building programs for Jewish high school students. We want the congregational identities that can divide us to fade as, alas, bad actors who intend to harm any of us make no distinction between "different kinds" of Jews. This does not mean erasing theological differences, but rather creating time for our older children to develop new skills with peers across denominations. Our rabbis should take joy in seeing Jewish children regard themselves as part of a unified faith-based community as they also appreciate their own family's traditions. This inter-generational action builds on *ahavat Israel* while developing skills necessary for *pikuach nefesh*.

Third, ***The power is out, again!?*** We can enhance our households' resilience in the face of environmental change. Every household in our community can be stocked with a seven-day supply of water, shelf-stable food, water purification devices, sanitation items, medicine, and veterinary supplies to contend with natural disasters or other disruptions. Jewish Family Services is suited to take subscriptions for such kits, and assemble, sell, and distribute them (as well as accepting donations to make kits available to those who cannot afford them). Preparing for foreseeable disruptions like a power outage allows each of us to help others as one helps oneself.

Fourth, ***Help your neighbor***. Jewish Federation should establish a group of volunteers who each commit 10 hours a year to skill-building that will enable them to come to the aid of others. This threshold is modest, yet enough to complete Red Cross-type training and certifications together. As an additional benefit, this will also build a roster of individuals who can come to the service of neighbors in hard times.

Fifth, ***Family-to-Family Check Ups***. Each family that wishes to do so, should pair with another Jewish family they already know to check on each other by phone, text or email in the event of a tornado, blizzard, power failure, or other unusual event in our area. If one cannot confirm the other family's well-being within, say, 12 hours of reaching out to them, promise to go to their home to make sure they are OK. If something seems worrisome, you can inform police or ambulance of a potential emergency. This is particularly valuable for those who live alone or have medical conditions.

Sixth, ***Share phone numbers***. Licensed security guards and security volunteers serving at each Jewish facility across the Ann Arbor area should know each other and have each other's phone numbers. Their ability to communicate real-time about developing situations that may not yet be clear helps build a safer community. A culture of informal information-sharing among front line observers offers a no-cost step to manage risks to our actual safety. While no one wants a reputation for "crying wolf," grievous attacks often start with seemingly innocent surveillance of targets over time that a security guard or volunteer is in the best position to notice.

Seventh, ***Hire licensed security guards***. Establish a common fund to defray the cost of armed guards for each congregation, school, summer camp, and public event. Because we share the dangers, we should share the cost of securing all of us. The Jewish Federation is well positioned to do this — such a fund already exists under the rubric of the LiveSecure Program to cover the cost of stronger doors, windows, vehicle bollards, cameras and alarm systems. LiveSecure provides a model for developing the financial means to support guards across the community. The good news is that no Jewish facility in the United States that was protected by a guard has suffered a loss of life. Unless there is also a guard, the way we use our religious and public buildings necessarily minimizes the safety furnished by a $4,000 bullet resistant door in comparison to a standard commercial grade door. For a sense of scale, $4,000 is enough to cover 130 hours of armed security at $30 per hour — or the duration of approximately 30–35 weekly Sabbath services. Evidence informs us to invest first in guards.

Eighth, ***Facilitate confidential and candid conversations***. Everyone involved in our community's security enterprise should protect their electronic communications by installing on their phone the Signal encrypted messaging app and the Proton Mail zero-access email service. These free services are used by journalists and human rights advocates working in countries that restrict civil liberties. While that is not the situation we confront, we should realize that regular text and email messages, especially the email systems of Jewish organizations, are targeted for hacking by sophisticated malefactors in the U.S. and overseas.

With simple steps based on human connections we can enhance community safety. Rather than feeling alone, overlooked, or overwhelmed by awful possibilities, we can transform a troubling situation into a positive opportunity for each of us. ■

What do you think when you see a pile of rings from Auschwitz?

By Avishay Hayut

Two hands hold wedding rings from a huge pile on display in the Auschwitz concentration camp museum. The rings belonged to murdered victims, mostly to Jews who were mass murdered by Zyklon B gas and stripped of all of their belongings — rings, jewelry, and even golden teeth, the valuable materials that were left after their extermination.

How much empathy do you have towards the victims and their surviving families? Do you wonder if there is a difference in your reaction if you are a Jew or if you aren't? I have so many more questions and I really am interested to know your answers.

I'll tell you why. It is because both of my parents are Holocaust survivors. This picture is a real photo from Auschwitz and the Holocaust really did happen!

It is amazing to me that so many Holocaust deniers would deign to use Holocaust imagery to support their political agenda, even going so far as to call the other side Nazis. Can it be that these people are misinformed, unaware, or ignorant of that time in history? Of course, but I believe in this case that I am discussing, the people who used this Holocaust imagery to support their political views do this fully aware of the historical facts and use it to stoke fear and hate with implicit antisemitic over- and undertones.

What I am referring to is when Kristina Karamo, chair of the Michigan Republican Party, used the above-mentioned photo to stoke fear about upcoming gun safety legislation in the state legislature. She purposefully used this horrific image with untruthful captioning to claim that "they" are coming to take your freedom, stoking hate and fear. She then doubled down when called on it.

Freedom is not defined by the number of guns one has. The freedom to purchase military-style weapons has led to hundreds of mass shootings with higher and higher victim counts every year, and that number is increasing by the moment. No, the poor victims of the Holocaust had no guns, they were unarmed, scared, and defenseless. They were mostly Jews but were also LGBTQ+, the disabled, the Roma, and even Black like Chairwoman Karamo, none of whom deserved to be discriminated against or to suffer such a fate! However, when one wants to spread fear and hate, it doesn't matter so long as the image serves the purpose to dog whistle constituents. As of yet, I have not heard of any elected Republican official apologizing for this deeply offensive post.

Fear is a primal reaction to survival and to preserving the self/group/community. Hate is what comes out of the fear, directed towards the perceived threat. Humankind's worst leaders have used and continue to stoke fear, directing hate towards an easy to scapegoat target. It is all too often used to rile up support of the misinformed and those in our society whose position and safety feels threatened in some way. The results are catastrophic. Even since the Holocaust, genocide has been happening time and time again.

I believe that hate is very easy to evoke. It needs almost no effort. Though it takes emotional energy, that energy is usually directed not towards the self but towards the other, the perceived reason for the threat. Love, on the other hand, is much harder to evoke since it requires constant emotional and mental work. To be successful, you would need to allow yourself to empathize with the "other," those who do not look like you, behave like you, believe like you … After all, we are all humans. Whether you believe that we were created by one Creator or if you simply believe in what we call humanity, we are still here together, part of this one wonderful world.

Let's choose *love* and *work* towards it!

The author of this article is one of the co-authors of: The Ones Who Remember: Second Generation Voices of the Holocaust published by City Press. ■

Adamah summer day of training

By Carly Silverman, Adamah staff

This summer Adamah Detroit (formerly Hazon) will convene Jewish educators who are interested in exploring the world of Jewish environmental education. Adamah Detroit will be hosting a Jewish Environmental Educator training on August 20 at the Metro-Detroit JCC. This day-long training experience will bridge the connection between Judaism, community, and the natural world through hands-on, thoughtful, and engaging Jewish environmental education content across different ages, Jewish backgrounds, and religious approaches. Adamah is currently in the process of designing a year-long professional development program for young Jewish adults who are interested in pursuing a career in the field. In tandem with this national work, Adamah Detroit will develop a cohort of Jewish educators using resources from the national Adamah ecosystem. We aim to engage, inspire, and support a cohort of local Jewish professionals and educators who will in turn help direct the integration of environmental education, stewardship, and action into Jewish institutional life.

This opportunity is open to anyone who is interested in the integration of Jewish community, sustainability, and environmental education; additionally, we are looking for congregations and organizations who are interested in partnering on this opportunity and will send their staff to this day of learning. Anyone who attends the training will be invited to join a cohort and will have additional opportunities for professional development, access to Jewish environmental education curriculum, and a platform to share resources and ideas with other Jewish educators.

Adamah runs Jewish environmental education programs in partnership with hundreds of Jewish organizations across the country. Our programs explore the ecological wisdom inherent in Jewish tradition while facilitating personal growth and community building. Year after year, we have seen the benefit of unplugging, slowing down, and taking the time to learn in nature, and how this fosters responsibility and independence within young learners as they form deeper connections to the Earth based on gratitude, awareness, and joy. Our over 25-year history is one big family, which is part of the even bigger families of JOFEE (Jewish Outdoor Food, Farming, and Environmental Education) organizations like Wilderness Torah, Adamah Farm, Eden Village Camp, and the broader Jewish environmental movement. As our community has grown across the world, it has retained and spread its sense of shared values, celebration, and love. We look forward to welcoming Jewish educators in Michigan into this family and providing access to this wealth of knowledge and experience.

Attendees of our Jewish Environmental Educator training can look forward to learning about awareness, ecology, and responsibility, with the themes of interconnectedness and togetherness woven throughout. Additionally, we'll explore how these topics are Jewish every step of the way. This training will be completely experiential — we learn by doing. We'll explore Jewish values and environmental concepts through outdoor games and play. We'll tap into a curriculum that emphasizes activities that heighten the senses and increase our ability to observe and experience the natural world. We'll learn Jewish crafts and create ritual objects made from local and recycled materials, and how these crafts support the centrality of environmental responsibility to Jewish life and a sense of ownership and pride over participation in Jewish ritual. Participants will receive take-home resources and curricula to help them infuse Jewish environmental education programming in their camp, school, synagogue, or personal lives.

We are actively accepting partnerships from congregations and organizations who would like to register on behalf of their staff, and welcome registration from individuals who are excited about this training. The training will take place on Sunday, August 20, at the Metro-Detroit JCC from 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Thanks to generous support for the William Davidson Foundation and the D. Dan and Betty Kahn Foundation, registration costs start at $36 per person and will include a kosher catered lunch. Following the training, attendees will be invited to join our Jewish environmental educator cohort. For any questions or additional information, please contact Carly Silverman, Adamah Detroit's Education and Program Manager, at carly.silverman@adamah.org. Registration can be found on our website at www.adamah.org/detroit. ■

Frankel Institute Fellows for 2023–2024

In the upcoming academic year, the Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies will focus on the theme of "Jewish Visual Cultures." Under the leadership of co-head fellows Deborah Dash Moore, University of Michigan, and Richard I. Cohen, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 12 scholars from four countries will explore aspects of Jewish visual creativity.

Studies of visual imagination in Jewish life have exploded in recent years. From the growth of Jewish museums throughout the USA and Europe to the founding of new journals devoted to Jewish art, Jewish visual culture has engaged broad audiences. Scholarly and popular studies, exhibitions, and films have enlightened on a range of themes from the medieval past to the present day. In diverse formats, they depict the way Jews and Jewish culture and religion were seen, extending understanding of the intricate relations between Jews and others. These portrayals have added important dimensions to the imagination of Jewish life as a minority throughout history and recently as a majority.

The Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies will devote the 2023–2024 year to an exploration of many facets of Jewish visual imagination. It will probe how Jewish experiences with and attitudes toward the visual intersected with those of the majority populations, and with minority populations in Israel. Jewish visuality has both challenged and coexisted with the hallmark of Jewish culture — the literary text — raising the question of how visual culture broadens and complicates Jewish narratives. The Frankel Institute theme year will address these questions as well as investigating the significant place that visual culture has occupied in Jewish historical development, considering monuments, manuscripts, synagogue architecture, ephemera, ceremonial art (Judaica), printed books, drawings, and fashion items. Fellows at the Institute will bring these historical questions into dialogue with research on 20th and 21st century contemporary art, photography, architecture, and exhibition practices.

The 2023–2024 Frankel fellows and their fields of research are:

Jeffrey Abt, Wayne State University, "The Indigeneity of Heterogeneity: An Exploration of Visual Languages in the History of Judaica"

Inka Bertz, Jewish Museum Berlin, "The Entrance of Jews into the Artistic Professions"

Zoya Brumberg-Kraus, University of Texas at Austin, "From Gold Mountain to Tinseltown: Ethnic Identity in California's Architectural Vernacular"

Irit Carmon Popper, Technion Israel Institute of Technology and Haifa University, "Past Imperfect: Contemporary Art Versus Heritage in Historic Sites in Israel — A New Comparative Framework"

Julia Phillips Cohen, Vanderbilt University, "Tastemakers: How a Forgotten Group of Jews from the Middle East and North Africa Shaped Modern European Culture"

Richard I. Cohen, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, "Revisiting Jewish Icons in Modern Culture and History"

Deborah Dash Moore, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, "Camera as Passport"

Rebekka Grossman, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, "Mobilizing Views: A Jewish History of Humanitarian Photography, 1917–1975"

Jacobé Huet, University of Buffalo - SUNY, "Elie Azagury: Architect of Jewish Liminality in Morocco"

Louis Kaplan, University of Toronto, "Jewish Photographic Humor in Dark Times: Reflections on Visual First Responders to the Third Reich"

Vladimir Levin, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, "Muskeljudentum and Lachrymose Prayer: How Jewish Historians Constructed Fortress Synagogues"

Steven Samols, University of Southern California, "Capturing Difference, Making History: The Photobook as a Jewish Artifact"

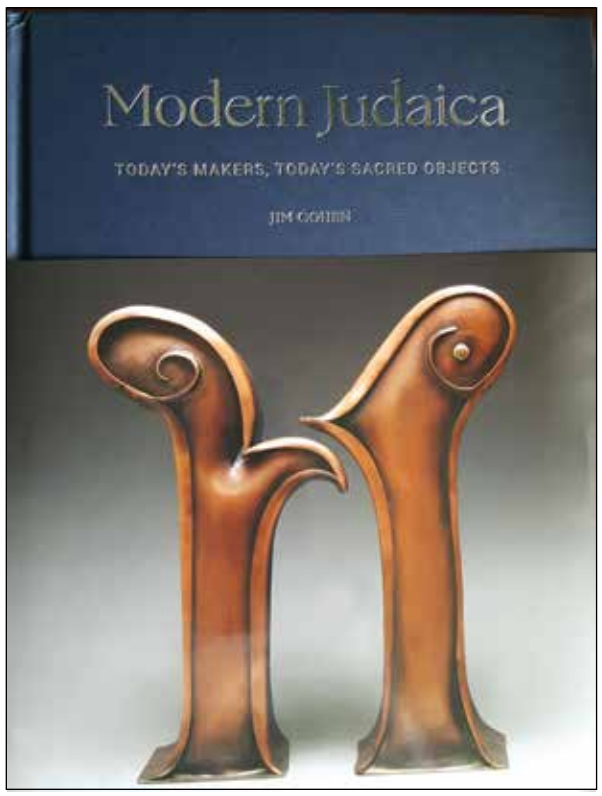
Catherine Soussloff, University of British Columbia and University of California, Santa Cruz, "Shadows of Diaspora: Material Culture at the Crossroads of Islamic Art and Jewish History"

Roni Tzoreff, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, "Israeli Art in the Age of 'Multiculturalism': The Exhibitions for Israel's 50th Independence Day" ■

Today's Jewish artisans and their creations

Modern Judaica: Today's Makers, Today's Sacred Objects by Jim Cohen, reviewed by Janet Kelman

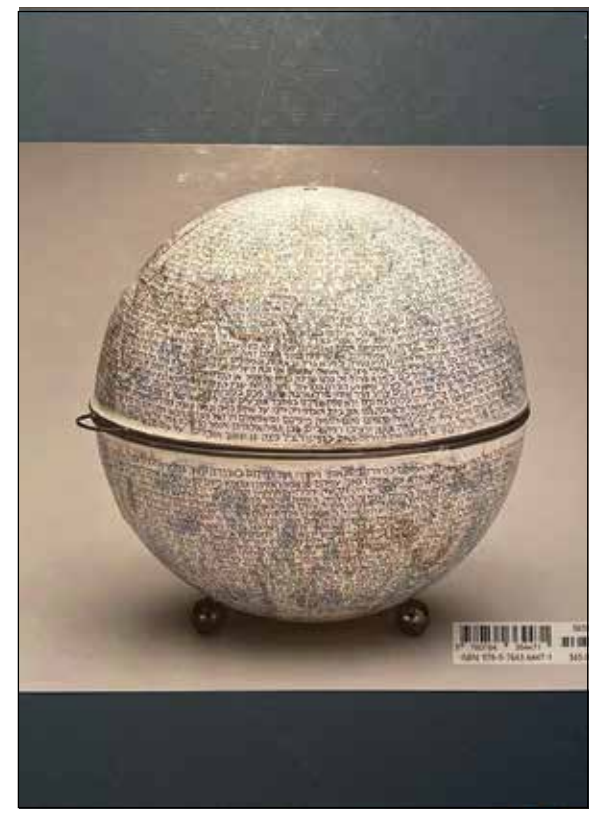
Modern Judaica, by Jim Cohen, is a book to treasure. Included are works by over 50 of the most talented contemporary Judaica artists. While most of the artists reside in the United States, several others live in Israel, the Netherlands, England, and Australia. Cohen interviewed each artist and includes a conversational chronicle of their family background. Stunning photographs adorn the text. The author says, "I stand in awe of these men and women. Their work is tied together by their passion."



Through the interviews, we learn about what brought each artist to create Judaica. While the photographs are breathtaking, the narratives form a complementary, perhaps even more engaging, aspect to the book. Each artist tells a unique story. Several artists were raising children when they felt a need to surround their family with a rich, spiritual home. One artist, Cynthia Eid, sent her children to Hebrew school, began studying herself, and converted between her sons' bar mitzvahs. She saw a catalogue of a Judaica show about menorahs and was entranced. One of her silver Seder plates was exhibited in the Spertus Seder plate competition.

Most artists featured in *Modern Judaica* were raised to be aware of their Jewish heritage. Avner Moriah grew up in Israel. After graduating from Bezalel, in Jerusalem, he attended Yale's School of Art and was commissioned to create murals for the Jewish Theological Seminary building in New York. Moriah notes that Gershon Kekst, z"l, chairman of the JTS Board, was the "individual most responsible for turning me on to biblical texts." Moriah went on to create *The Illustrated Five Books of Moses*, which is placed in some of the most prestigious libraries and museums around the world.

Paula Newman Pollachek, who grew up in a strong Jewish home and trained as a silversmith, says, "I see Judaica as the perfect mix of art and function. I love that the pieces are used, valued as a special part in a Jewish family, and also displayed as art in the home while it's not functioning for the ritual."



Some of the book's artists create Judaica as one of a kind commissions and others offer pieces that are made in multiples and so are more affordable. The commissioned works include Torah covers, parochets, ketuvahs, eternal lights, tallises that incorporate family heirlooms, and the mosaic wall of a mikvah. Jeanette Kuvin Oren has worked with over 400 synagogues and Jewish organizations to create site-specific fabric art. Oren says, "I enjoy the intense communication with the stakeholders and helping them get to a consensus. Communication helps me hone the designs and keeps members involved at every point in the process." She created Torah covers for the Tree of Life Congregation, in Pittsburgh, beginning in 2007. After the shooting in 2018, a Torah was commissioned in memory of the victims and Oren designed and sewed the Torah cover.

Idelle Hammond-Sass, a jeweler working in Ann Arbor, has created intimate Judaica, an eternal light, for her small congregation. Also pictured is a menorah and a tzedakah box of gold and silver. Hammond-Sass says, "To me, Judaica is intertwined with the individual's Jewish experience. To look at a beautiful Kiddush cup is to experience one level of joy. To use it activates and elevates the object."

Tamar Paley, who lives in Jerusalem, fashions wearable ritual objects for women. She trained as a jeweler/designer. Paley explains, "A lot of my designs are more conceptual rather than practical, well-crafted pieces that when worn make a strong statement and have the power to evoke change." "Seven Blessings for a Woman" and "Tallit" sprang from Paley's imagination in order to offer ritual objects that reflect women's concerns: protection, healing, and gratitude. The focus of "Tallit" is a hard silver atarah that spells out part of the Modeh Ani prayer in the feminine. "The pieces in this collection usually combine metals and textiles. There are rules about which fabric can be used in tallit, and different traditions that relate to how to tie the tzitzit. I gave a lot of thought to those issues. I bought the traditional fringe and learned how to tie them, but ultimately, I decided that in doing so, I would lose the freedom I wanted in creating something new. I didn't want to be bound to any rules or restrictions but rather capture the essence of the original ritual objects." Paley's work also includes a striking bracelet (phylacteries) constructed of sterling silver, acrylic string, and a digitally printed parchment.

Lynne Avadenka is an artist living in Huntington Woods, Michigan. She describes her approach to Judaica in this way. "A constant in my work is an ongoing engagement with Jewish subject matter: classic texts, history, ritual, and ceremony. The powerful combination of traditional Judaic content and the choices I make as a contemporary American artist present a challenge: to create a synthesis — inspired by tradition and informed by modernity — and preserve the ancient spirituality of the material while connecting it to a wide audience in the present." "World Book," a piece Avadenka created for a show at the San Francisco Contemporary Jewish Museum, is a hagadah inscribed on a 12" diameter globe. "The lettering is totally freehand. I started at the top and just spiraled it around. The globe opens up and contains the seder plate and the matzo tray, held in place by magnets." "World Book" is a feast for the eyes. Delicate calligraphy floats over a sumptuously mottled field of gray and white.

Anika Smulovitz, who lives in Boise, Idaho, is a silversmith who creates personal, one of a kind objects that relate to family and home. For her daughter, she cast a unique silver candleholder each year until, at age nine, the collection became a Chanukah menorah. For her son's bar mitzvah, Smulovitz cast his finger in silver and presented him with a yad.

Hillel Smith is a graphic artist and a wild man. He has advertised Shabbat each week through a concert poster. "Each one incorporates the name of the Torah portion in Hebrew into the design and tries to tell the whole story in this very minimal graphic design language." He asks, "How do I completely reinvent the alphabet to keep it interesting for me?" He has created sets of dreidels, of painted wood, that invite you to play. Every Purim, he makes mishloach manot boxes to pass out to friends. One featured images of Mordechai and Haman. Turn it upside down and it reads the same, Mordechai and Haman. Wildly reimagining Judaica, Smith favors boundaries that touch distant horizons.

The compilation of *Modern Judaica*, as a chronicle of artists and their work, was an inspired creation for Jim Cohen. The intriguing narratives and spectacular photographs make this book essential for readers who love and value ritual objects. Its significance will only increase with the passage of time. ■

Director of Kfar Silver Youth Village, ORT special guest

by Joan Levitt

The Ann Arbor Chapter of ORT America will hold its Annual Donor Dinner on Tuesday, May 9. The catered dinner will be at held 6 p.m., at Temple Beth Emet

We are honored to have Amos Gofer, Director of Kfar Silver Youth Village in southern Israel, as our speaker. The title of his talk is "From Math to Farming: Transforming Every Student Through Education." Many of the students at Kfar Silver come from high-risk backgrounds, and some of its students are refugees from Ukraine. The 750 students, many boarding at Kfar Silver, benefit greatly from its emphasis on STEM education, as well as learning important life lessons from the farm operating at the village.

This event will also provide ORT members, and prospective members, the opportunity to honor the chapter's generous donors. Donors' contributions to ORT America are essential for ORT's programs to serve the needs of 200,000 people annually in more than 30 countries around the world.

This in-person event will allow our members to connect with each other and with ORT America staff members, and to learn about World ORT's important work in Ukraine, Israel, and other countries. It will also give the community a chance to learn more about this important work in the Jewish world. Community members are invited to join us after dinner, at 7:30 p.m., for dessert and to hear Gofer's talk.

ORT is a global educational network driven by Jewish values and innovation, preparing people and communities for meaningful, self-sufficient futures. For more than 140 years, World ORT has offered access to educational programs in under-resourced communities. Today, ORT also serves as a foundational Jewish institution in diaspora Jewish communities around the world.

Details about the dinner are to come. Rides will be available to those who need them. For more information or to RSVP, please contact Joan Levitt at jflevitt2@gmail.com by May 3. . ■.

Jewish Federation OF GREATER ANN ARBOR

JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER ANN ARBOR

Annual Meeting

WEDNESDAY, MAY 31, 2023

at the JCC of Greater Ann Arbor

With Keynote Address from former Cong. Brenda Lawrence

Executive Director of Spill the Honey

Spill the Honey amplifies the historic African American-Jewish civil rights coalition to build partnerships transcending race, class, gender, and ethnicity today.

Don't be left out: 2023 Allocations will be announced

There's still time to make your gift to the 2023 Annual Community Campaign before allocations are announced at the Annual Meeting.

Help us surpass last year's total of more than $1.5 million for organizations and initiatives that enhance our Jewish community locally and around the world.

No single gift does more - whether it's $18 or $1800, every gift matters!

Register & more info at JewishAnnArbor.org

The Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor

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Sunday, May 7, at 4p.m. **Discussion with Professor Devi Mays, University of Michigan*

WEEK ONE OF VIRTUAL STREAMING

Beginning Monday, May 8, at noon through Sunday, May 14 – last screening at noon.

America (2022, Drama, Czech Republic/Germany/Israel, w/ subtitles, 127 mins)

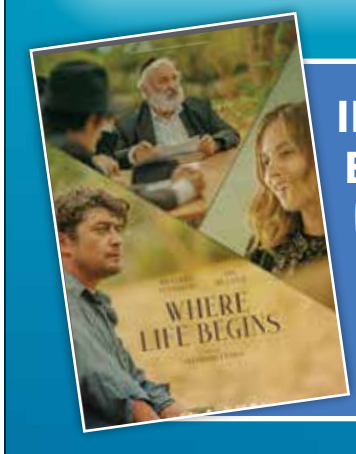
The Narrow Bridge (2022, Documentary, Australia, English, Arabic, Hebrew, w/subtitles, 76 mins)

Reckonings (2022, Documentary, USA, 84 mins)

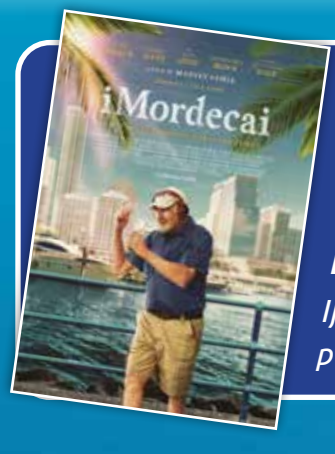
The Forger (2022, Biography/Drama, Germany/Luxembourg, w/ subtitles, 116 mins)

Karaoke (2022, Comedy/Drama, Israel, w/subtitles, 100 mins)

SHORT FILM SELECTION I



IN-PERSON EVENT
Where Life Begins
State Theatre
Wednesday, May 10 at 7p.m.



IN-PERSON SPONSOR NIGHT
Thursday, May 11 • Michigan Union
SPONSORS ONLY Dinner at 5:45p.m.
***iMORDECAI* at 7p.m.**
If you are not a sponsor, you can still view this film by purchasing a ticket online or at the Michigan Union.

SPONSORS *(as of April 14, 2023)* • Charles (Z"L) and Rita Gelman • The Ann and Jules Doneson Fund •

IN-PERSON MOTHER'S DAY • *Matchmaking* • State Theatre • Sunday, May 14, at 4p.m.

WEEK TWO OF VIRTUAL STREAMING

Beginning Monday, May 15, at noon through Sunday, May 21 - last screening at noon.

March '68 (2022, Drama/History, Poland, w/ subtitles, 117 mins)

Exodus 91 (2022, Documentary/Drama, Israel, w/ subtitles, 90 mins)

Lost Transport (2022, Drama/History, Netherlands/Luxembourg/ Germany, w/ subtitles, 98 mins)

Story of Annette Zelman (2022, Drama, France, w/subtitles, 93 mins)

Paris Boutique (2022, Comedy, Israel/France, w/subtitles, 81 mins)

SHORT FILM SELECTION II

IN-PERSON EVENT

SHTTL • State Theatre

Wednesday, May 17, at 7p.m.

**Discussion with Professor Jeffrey Veidlinger, University of Michigan*

IN-PERSON CLOSING EVENT

Holy Wine • State Theatre

Thursday, May 18, at 7p.m.

**Followed by Afterglow Israeli Wine Tasting*

WEEK THREE OF VIRTUAL STREAMING

Beginning Monday, May 22, at noon through Sunday, May 28 - last screening at noon.

Farewell, Mr. Haffmann (2021, Drama , Belgium/France, w/subtitles 115 mins)

Where Life Begins (2022, Drama, Italy, w/subtitles, 101 mins)

iMORDECAI (2021, Drama/Comedy, USA, 102 mins)

Matchmaking (2022, Comedy, Israel, w/ subtitles, 96 mins)

SHTTL (2022, Drama, France/ Ukraine, Yiddish w/subtitles, 114 mins)

Sauvons les Enfants (2021, Documentary/Holocaust, France, w/subtitles 64 mins)

The Shadow of the Day (2022, Drama/Romance, Italy, w/subtitles, 125 mins)

All Virtual Festival Pass • $150

Pick 10 – Virtual Festival Pass • $80

Pick 5 – Virtual Festival Pass • $50

Individual Tickets • $12

To learn more: **jccannarbor.org**

Sponsorship Information

Please consider becoming a sponsor for the Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival.

Sponsorships include all virtual films and in-person events.

Cast member	$180
Cinematographer	$360
Director	$500
Producer	$1,000
Executive Producer	$2,500
Studio Executive	$5,000
Studio Founder	$10,000
Film star	$25,000

• Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor • Beth Israel Congregation • Center for Jewish Studies EMU

Beth Kirschner's Copper Divide, an excerpt

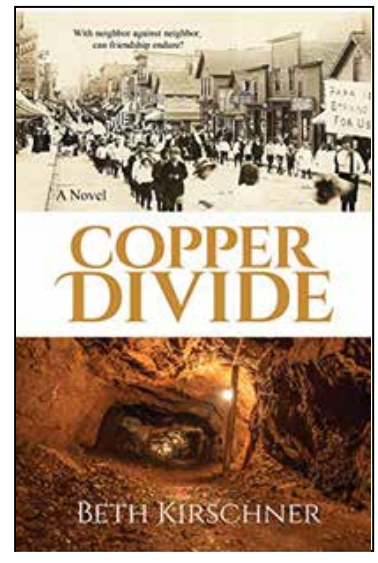
December 10, 1913

Hannah knew she was dreaming, but didn't want to wake up. She was skiing, her feet tied to a pair of long boards with a single strap binding, tarred and waxed on the bottom. Perilous on the copper country hills. Aaron was leading the way, followed by Hannah, her brother Sam, and his wife Ida. Nelma was taking up the rear. The skis slid smoothly through Aaron's tracks: push and glide, push and glide. In her dream, she had the rhythm down unlike any waking attempts. Her arms planting the poles just so at each stride. The trees around them were pregnant with snow. The sky above was cloudless and blue.

Then there were two explosions behind her, the echo of gunshot breaking the winter quiet. She turned, in the slow motion of a nightmare, to see her brother bloodied in the snow. As Ida approached, she too was felled by a gunshot. Hannah looked to Aaron for help, but he just stood there looking perplexed, his hands probing a chest wound and then extending to her, the blood staining the clean white snow before he collapsed.

Now Hannah wanted to wake up, but she had to first find her friend, her dear friend Nelma, who was the last to join them for this outing. Nelma stood defiantly behind them and lowered her rifle slightly, pausing and then swinging it over her shoulder. "You'll never understand us," she said before turning and skiing away.

Hannah was awake now; open eyes staring at her bedroom ceiling. Examining the hairline cracks in the paint above, while her heart beat madly and the whole room appeared at an odd tilt. She knew it was a bad dream yet still was disturbed by its dark message. She remembered the Painesdale shootings. Three miners and a neighbor girl gunned down in the middle of the night. Two of the miners had been regular guests to her pinochle games. Both were good men, handsome and with a sense of humor. The details of the dream fell away leaving only horror and dread. The feeling of being personally singled out by tragedy. Last night, Hannah had gone to sleep hoping all would seem clearer in the morning, and was deeply disappointed.



She lay in bed for a long time before dressing. She felt detached from time and it wasn't until she had finished combing her hair that she remembered the day. Wednesday. Downstairs, she heard her parents talking, the samovar gurgling, and the hiss of the fire as someone threw another log in the kitchen stove. She tread cautiously down the stairs, as if this too was a dream in danger of turning ugly.

"Hannah, dear," Mother said as she entered the kitchen. "You're finally awake. I think you have a predisposition to sleep if no one knocks on your door."

"It's late?" Hannah asked, helping herself to a cup of coffee.

"Almost 8:00," Mother said. "We've already eaten. Father's just been to the store and back. He posted a note explaining we'd be closed all day."

"It's an odd morning," Father said. "Merchants and saloons have posted notes. They're even closing the mines so everyone can attend the rally."

"Everyone should attend. They must!" Hannah said, gripping each arm with the other. "I placed Citizens' Alliance handbills everywhere I could think of, even outside the union commissary. No one dared stop me."

"The Book of Job has much to teach us," Father said. "Job's bewilderment at the chaos, the injustice, is our bewilderment. We must have faith that all will be well."

Hannah had never heard Father quote scripture before; she was surprised that he would find comfort in it. Mother perhaps, but Father was more likely to go through the motions with all the enthusiasm of a child taking his medicine.

After breakfast, Mother sent her on a walk to pass the time. Hannah was impatient for things to get in motion, and Mother grew tired of her anxious energy. Later, she would be needed in the kitchen; Sam had invited many neighbors and friends for a midday potluck. The rally was to start after noon, after the services for the murdered miners. There would be marches in Calumet and marches in Houghton. These would be citizen marches, supplanting the strikers in the streets. There had been enough unrest from the strikers. Enough picketing, parades and riots. It was time to take back their community. Outside, the city seemed to be holding its breath in expectation. The streets were as quiet as on Sunday, when their Christian neighbors went to church. She climbed Quincy Hill, seeing nobody along the way. Hannah wondered if Nelma was remorseful, if she was ready to give up the strike. She hoped the next time they talked there would be no uncomfortable, divisive subjects.

Even the December snows had taken notice of the change, no longer falling from the sky, waiting to see what would happen next. At the top of Quincy Hill, she could see the whole city of Hancock below, the lift bridge across the portage, and the city of Houghton on the other side. The hillsides beyond the city were barren of any trees for quite a distance. There was a line beyond several folds of the land, a dark line of growth, where the old forests that once covered the peninsula resumed. Without knowing why, Hannah found hope in these distant trees. Perhaps it was their ability to persist, or perhaps they simply represented someplace away from here. ■

Save the Date for JFS Fundraising Events!

WALK A MILE IN MY SHOES

Sunday, September 10, 2023
Burns Park
Ann Arbor, MI

Join JFS on our annual fundraising walk in support of the diverse clients and community members that walk through our doors in need of help.

The Walk a Mile in My Shoes event directly supports JFS's Refugee Resettlement Programs.

Scan to view our 2022 event recap video!

Mosaic Celebration

Celebrating 30 Years of JFS!

Join us for an afternoon of food, culture and community while celebrating 30 years of serving Southeast Michigan.

NOV. 12, 2023 • 2 – 5 p.m.

WCC Morris Lawrence Building
Ann Arbor, MI

Proudly Honoring the Following:
Congresswoman Debbie Dingell

Homewatch CareGivers

Retirement Income Solutions
CELEBRATING 30 Years

JFS
Jewish Family Services
of Washtenaw County

To learn more about these events, or to get involved as a sponsor, contact Gabby Markowitz at gabbym@jfsannarbor.org

The many hearts of Adina Talve-Goodman

Your Hearts, Your Scars, reviewed by Emily Eisbruch

Your Hearts, Your Scars is a collection of personal essays published after the death of their author, Adina Talve-Goodman, at age 31. Adina's thoughtful writings bring us along on her journey as a person with major health challenges, including congenital heart issues that eventually required a heart transplant at age 19. Adina's family and friends compiled this volume with tremendous love, publishing it five years after her passing. The moving introduction by Adina's sister Sarika provides background on Adina's life and character and notes that "Adina held many hearts in hers."

Reading *Your Hearts, Your Scars*, I felt a mixture of admiration for Adina's talent and spirit and deep sadness for her early death. I connected to the story in a personal way. Like Adina, I attended Washington University in St. Louis. The University City "Loop" environment that Adina invokes in her powerful first story, about trying to help a large man in a broken wheelchair in a downpour, is a place I remember well.

Another connection is even stronger. In the late 1980s, my husband and I were members of the Reform congregation in St. Louis where Adina's mother Rabbi Susan Talve is the beloved leader. With tenderness and warmth, Rabbi Talve officiated our daughter's 1989 baby naming ceremony. At that time, Rabbi Talve had a two-year-old daughter, Adina, with serious heart issues requiring surgery, and the congregation rallied to provide support.

After moving to Michigan in 1992, I lost contact with Rabbi Talve, though I knew from the news that she was active in Black Lives Matter issues following the 2014 events in Ferguson, Missouri. Through seeing a social media post about the publication of *Your Hearts, Your Scars* in early 2023, and through reading the book, I learned that

Adina grew to become a wonderful young woman, a talented actress and writer. However, Adina's health struggles — heart transplant surgery at age 19 followed by immune suppressing medications, followed by cancer — tragically cut short her life.

The book shares Adina's stories of waiting for and then receiving a new heart, growing into the realms of sensuality and intimacy, bearing scars, housing memories in our bodies, and much more. In the touching and also occasionally humorous chapter "San Diego 2001," Adina recalls a California trip designed for teenagers who had received or were awaiting organ transplants (kidneys, livers, and hearts). During a bonfire on the beach, a teen from Michigan (a heart transplant recipient) suggests that the group should join hands, pray and thank Jesus for the organs that have been given. Adina recounts her experience as a Jew in this milieu, noting "I sat just outside the circle, eating granola bars my mother had packed for me and thinking that Jesus must be full of kidneys."

The chapter "Thank God for the Nights that Go Right" describes an evening about a decade after that California trip. Adina chats with Jesse, a man in his 30s who is a 14-year survivor of a heart transplant. Adina, at seven years post-transplant, considers Jesse's situation encouraging, as she'd understood the average heart transplant is good for about 10 years before cancer, kidney failure or other issues may arise. Their conversation, at a New York City bar, does not flow much beyond comparing medical situations. Adina writes "I should have asked him more questions — him at 14 years, nice, and willing to answer. But I couldn't even make proper eye contact with him. The questions I still have — the ones about death and donors and borrowed time — seemed out of place standing at the bar, Porkslap in one hand and heart in the other." On the subway ride home, Adina ruminates on a visit to a soft-spoken abbot during the years she was waiting for her transplant, and on how gratitude for her transplanted heart can sometimes wane. In a nice twist, Adina suddenly meets Jesse again at the end of the subway ride. The two acknowledge the weirdness of their bar conversation and hug before parting ways.

The chapter "The Condition of My Transplanted Heart," is Adina's story of the 10-year anniversary of her transplant. Adina visits a cemetery in Iowa, a state she's moved to for the university's famed MFA writing program. She reflects, "I might not be able to write a book; I might never find a partner; I might never have children; I might never get a haircut I like … I remember all the things I could not do before and, suddenly, the movement of my legs, the hunger in my stomach, the cold October morning, and my ability to stay warm are enough." Adina then says Kaddish for the donor and for the loss the donor's family endured.

Your Hearts, Your Scars concludes with information about the Adina Talve-Goodman Fellowship. This is an educational fellowship supporting an early-career fiction writer whose work centers, celebrates, or reclaims the experience of being marginalized. The fellowship's website links to recent recipients, and it's lovely to realize the creative flowering enabled through the fellowship and the way in which this honors Adina Talve-Goodman. ■

JEWISH COMMUNITY
RELATIONS COUNCIL

CALL TO ACTION

The JCRC of Greater Ann Arbor is seeking community volunteers who want to be involved in building relationships with non-Jewish faith-based and other historically marginalized communities.

Please Contact McKenzie Katz
Community Relations Manager
for more information
McKenzie@jewishannarbor.org

We look forward to your contributions to our vibrant Jewish community.

Jewish Federation OF GREATER ANN ARBOR

JYP Jewish Young Professionals

CALL FOR 2023-24 LEADERSHIP

Jewish Young Professionals (JYP) of greater Ann Arbor is seeking applicants for the 2023-2024 leadership team.
Opportunities range in commitment from planning one event to serving a full term on the Board, so don't hesitate to apply!

No interest is too big or too small!

JYP is a volunteer-led group of the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor that serves as the hub for young Jews in the Ann Arbor area.

Please Contact Ariella Hoffman-Peterson
JYP Coordinator
for more information
JYP@jewishannarbor.org

We look forward to your contributions to our vibrant Jewish community.

Jewish Federation OF GREATER ANN ARBOR

May at Beth Israel

Everyone is welcome to join Beth Israel for services, classes, and events. Services are being held in person and virtually. Below is a list of the links to participate virtually in services at Beth Israel. Beth Israel is now live streaming services on the Beth Israel YouTube channel (Beth Israel Congregation AA MI). All links are also available on the Beth Israel homepage (www.bethisrael-aa.org). Please note that passwords are used. Contact the office to get the passwords at office@bethisrael-aa.org.

Tot Shabbat
Saturday, May 13 and 27, 10:30 a.m.
Tot Shabbat continues as spring approaches. Join us for a playful morning of Jewish songs, games, and stories. Challah and grape juice kiddush included. For kids age 1 through 1st grade and their parents, but all are welcome to join.

Shabbat Schmooze
Saturday, May 13 & 27, 10:30 a.m.
We invite our older elementary students (2nd–5th grade) to join us for some ice breakers, challah and juice, traditional Shabbat prayers, weekly Torah portion activities, and time with friends both old and new.

Talmud Study with Rabbi Dobrusin (via Zoom)
Mondays at 4 p.m.
All are invited to join our Talmud study class. We will read the text in Hebrew or Aramaic with an accompanying English translation and all discussions will be in English so no familiarity with Hebrew is required. All are welcome to join the class at any time. The Zoom link can be found on the Beth Israel webpage (www.bethisrael-aa.org).

Aura of Kabbalat Shabbat
Friday, May 19, 6 p.m.
A Jewish Renewal-inspired singing service led by Rabbi Aura Ahuvia. The choir, dubbed the "Holy Levites," will be holding a rehearsal at 5:30 p.m. leading right up to and seamlessly into services. All are welcome to attend.

Volunteer Appreciation Brunch
Sunday, May 21, 9:45 a.m.
All volunteers, past, present, and yet to be inspired, are cordially invited to enjoy fresh homemade brunch in appreciation of what you have done, are doing, or might do for Beth Israel, whether it is ushering at holidays, attending or captaining minyan, leading services, or other projects. Come and hear about the Green Team's accomplishments and our ideas for our buildings and community. We are especially proud to welcome Adamah Detroit (formerly Hazon Detroit) for a dialogue program focused on Jewish identity and the climate. The dialogue will offer opportunities for chevruta (small-group) reflection and sharing, drawing on our rich Jewish tradition for inspiration for how we can build resilience through connection and action. There will be time to relax and schmooze with friends, and also the opportunity to engage in what we hope to be an invigorating program. We especially encourage our teen and newer members to join us, to help us create a common group, working together towards a more sustainable future for our congregation. For more questions, contact Michael S. Simon (simonmichael725@gmail.com) or to volunteer to help cook, Diane Wilson (dclonezer@aol.com).

Tikkun Leil Shavuot
Thursday, May 25, 8 p.m.
Watch the calendar and emails about details about this year's Tikkun Leil Shavuot.

Shavuot Services
Friday, May 26, 9:30 a.m.
Saturday, May 27, 9:30 a.m. with Yizkor

Home Shabbat: From the Rabbi's Table to Yours
Friday, May 26, 6 p.m.
Join Rav Nadav and his family for Kabbalat Shabbat service over Zoom (only) from their Shabbat table to yours on the last Friday of each month. Join at 5:40 p.m. for some pre-Shabbat visiting.

Theology Book Club - Online
Wednesdays at 8 p.m.
Beth Israel Congregation's Theology Book Club welcomes you to join them to read together and discuss books on Jewish thought and beliefs. The books are in English. Contact Paul Shifrin at (248) 514-7276 for more information.

In Person and Online Services

Evening Minyan – virtual only
Sunday at 5 p.m.
Monday–Thursday at 7:30 p.m.

Friday Evening Services – in person and virtual
Kabbalat Shabbat Service at 6 p.m.

Shabbat Morning Services – in person and virtual
Saturday at 9:30 a.m. ■

Monty's Public for summer food, fun, and pups

By Candace Bulkley and Trina Fuller

Candace and Trina became friends in the Temple Beth Emeth adult b'nai mitzvah class that graduated in 2022. They will be honing their palates, visiting, and writing about a variety of independent, locally owned Washtenaw County restaurants, catering to a variety of dietary preferences.

If you're looking for the kind of neighborhood spot where you can be a "regular," bring your dog to dine on the expanding patio during warm weather, and have a good meal at the same time, perhaps Monty's Public House is your place. It replaced the long-standing Banfield's Bar & Grill last year and has kept the community feel while upgrading the food and drink offerings and brightening the decor. It's the latest addition to locally owned BarStar Hospitality, which also includes downtown Ann Arbor nightclubs Babs' Underground, Lo-Fi, and Nightcap.

It was NCAA basketball tournament season at the time of our visit, so we arrived early on a Saturday night to get a table for dinner. We were greeted promptly, drinks were ordered, and our party of four settled in right away.

We couldn't resist ordering the homemade Monty's Mozz Sticks when we spotted them on the menu while enjoying our drinks. None of us had ever tried anything other than the frozen mozzarella sticks that are standard at most bars around town. They did not disappoint — the cheese was hot, gooey, had a crispy breading, and they were the perfect start to our meal. We were offered either marinara or ranch dipping sauce and were granted our wish to try both. The ranch was standard issue but the warm marinara stood out with its lightly seasoned fresh tomato flavor. We also tried the Creamy Spin Dip — a classic spinach-artichoke dip. The generous portion contained plenty of artichokes, fresh looking spinach, and a bubbling crown of browned cheese on top. We were offered warm pita bread or crackers with our dip — we asked for both and were pleasantly surprised to be served gluten-free rice crackers, which is welcome news for our gluten-sensitive friends, alongside the warm pita triangles. The tidy nine item appetizer list is intriguing — it includes lamb meatballs, poutine and Bayou Sticks made with Louisiana alligator.

While dining at a "Public House," one member of our group felt it obligatory to sample the English Style Fish & Chips and declared them delicious. The three hand-battered cod filets tasted fresh, mild, and sweet. The fish was served with respectable waffle fries, a generously dressed coleslaw and a house-made tartar sauce. The Shepherd's Pie was another classic pub selection that was devoured. The well-seasoned ground beef and lamb was slightly saucy and had the requisite peas and carrots with a layer of buttery mashed potatoes and a bit of cheddar cheese baked on top.

One dining companion chose the Club Cut Sirloin Steak. It was cooked perfectly to medium rare, served with Detroit's famous peppery zip sauce, tasty mashed potatoes, and broccoli — which was vibrant and delicious. It is worth noting the steak did not break the bank — it was reasonably priced at $20. We also enjoyed the Monty burger — a classic American smash patty with cheddar cheese, shredded lettuce, pickles, and special sauce on a brioche bun. We upgraded the standard side of house-made potato chips to waffle fries (other choices were tater tots or a side salad). It also came with a pickle on the side. The menu notes that all burgers are gluten-free without the bun. Gluten-free and vegetarian options are clearly marked on the menu.

In line with their aim to be a neighborhood eatery, Monty's supports local businesses. The Beer & Cheese Dip appetizer is served with freshly baked pretzel sticks from DJ's Bakery, located across the street. No frozen pretzels here! We look forward to trying them next time. They also offer the outstanding cheesecake from Ypsilanti's EK'S Cheesecakes. Through their support of other local small businesses, they make our community food web stronger.

Happy hours, specials, sporting events shown on nine TV screens, and other entertainment are offered all week long. A pub brunch on Saturday and Sunday is served from 11 a.m.–3 p.m. Monty's thankfully maintained the Banfield's game room with pinball machines and a pool table. It can be reserved at no charge as a semi-private party room (with the exception of Fridays and Saturdays from 5–8 p.m.) and seats 12 at tables and six on barstools. Free Pub Quiz Nights on Tuesdays at 7 and 8 p.m. and Sunday at 6 p.m. are well attended and you play for prizes.

The Good Pup Club is a new feature that the restaurant plans to expand as they ease into summer offerings. Top point earners in the Monty's Mug-less Club (signup on the web site) can have their dog's photo added to the gallery on the landing of the stairway to the lower level. Currently, the pictured dogs belong to staffers. The namesake Monty, belonging to BarStar Hospitality owner Micah Bartelme, is featured at the center of the gallery. The lower level banquet room is expected to open mid-summer and will be available for private events (seating 30–40 people) as well as overflow seating for the restaurant. It seems like it would be the perfect spot for end-of-season sports team events.

There is plenty to like about Monty's Public House. They serve a well-rounded menu with a variety of items that will satisfy most diners with plenty of vegetarian and vegan options available. Service was friendly and attentive. Our glasses were kept full, and corrections were quickly made. For $10 you can even buy "A Round for the Kitchen" to enjoy after their shift. They certainly deserve it!

Monty's Public House
https://www.montyspuba2.com/
3140 Packard St., Ann Arbor

734-929-5462 ■

"Two Israels": What's really behind the judicial reform protests

Andrew Silow-Carroll, originally for the JTA

When Benjamin Netanyahu put his controversial calls for judicial reform on pause in March, many thought the protesters in Israel and abroad might declare victory and take a break. And on a weekend in April some 200,000 people demonstrated in Tel Aviv, and pro-democracy protests continued among Diaspora Jews and Israeli expats, including those who gather each Sunday in New York's Washington Square Park.

On its face, the weeks of protest have been about proposed legislation that critics said would sap power from the Israeli Supreme Court and give legislators — in this case, led by Netanyahu's recently elected far-right coalition — unchecked and unprecedented power. Protesters said that, in the absence of an Israeli constitution establishing basic rights and norms, they were fighting for democracy. The government too says the changes are about democracy, claiming under the current system unelected judges too often overrule elected lawmakers and the will of Israel's diverse electorate.

But the political dynamics in Israel are complex, and the proposals and the backlash are also about deeper cracks in Israeli society. Yehuda Kurtzer, president of the Shalom Hartman Institute of North America, recently said in a podcast that the crisis in Israel represents "six linked but separate stories unfolding at the same time." Beyond the judicial reform itself, these stories include the Palestinians and the occupation, a resurgent patriotism among the center and the left, chaos within Netanyahu's camp, a Diaspora emboldened to weigh in on the future of Zionism and the rejection on the part of the public of a reform that failed the "reasonableness test."

"If these protests are effective in the long run, it will be, I think, because they will have succeeded at reorganizing and mobilizing the Israeli electorate to think and behave differently than before," said Kurtzer.

I recently asked observers, here and in Israel, what they feel is really mobilizing the electorate, and what kind of Israel will emerge as a result of the showdown. The respondents included organizers of the protests, supporters of their aims and those skeptical of the protesters' motivations. They discussed a slew of issues just below the surface of the protest, including the simmering Israeli-Palestinian conflict, divisions over the increasing strength of Israel's Haredi Orthodox sector, and a lingering divide between Ashkenazi Jews with roots in Europe and Mizrahi Jews whose ancestry is Middle Eastern and North African.

Conservatives, meanwhile, insist that Israeli "elites" — the highly educated, the tech sector, the military leadership, for starters — don't respect the will of the majority who brought Netanyahu and his coalition partners to power.

Here are the emerging themes of weeks of protest:

Defending democracy

Whatever their long-term concerns about Israel's future, the protests are being held under the banner of "democracy."

For Alon-Lee Green, one of the organizers of the protests, the issues are equality and fairness. "People in Israel," said Green, national co-director of Standing Together, a grassroots movement in Israel, "hundreds of thousands of them, are going out to the streets for months now not only because of the judicial reform, but also — and mainly — because of the fundamental question of what is the society we want to live in: Will we keep living in a society that is unequal, unfair, and that is moving away from our basic needs and desires, or will it be an equal society for everyone who lives in our land?"

Shany Granot-Lubaton, who has been organizing pro-democracy rallies among Israelis living in New York City, says Netanyahu, National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, and the coalition's Haredi Orthodox parties "are waging a war against democracy and the freedoms of citizens."

"They seek to exert control over the Knesset and the judicial system, appoint judges in their favor, and legalize corruption," she said. "If this legal coup is allowed to proceed, minorities will be in serious danger, and democracy itself will be threatened."

Two researchers at the Institute for Liberty and Responsibility at Herzliya's Reichman University, psychology student Benjamin Amram and research associate Keren L.G. Snider, said Netanyahu's proposed judicial reform "undermines the integrity of Israel's democracy by consolidating power."

"How can citizens trust a government that ultimately has no limitations set upon them?" they asked in a joint email. "At a time when political trust and political representation are at the lowest points, this legislation can only create instability and call into question the intentions of the current ruling party. When one coalition holds all the power, laws and policies can be swiftly overturned, causing instability and volatility."

A struggle between two Israels

Other commentators said the protests revealed fractures within Israeli society that long predated the conflict over judicial reform. "The split is between those that believe Israel should be a more religious country, with less democracy, and see democracy as only a system of elections and not a set of values, and those who want Israel to remain a Jewish and democratic state," Tzipi Livni, who served in the cabinets of right-wing prime ministers Ariel Sharon and Ehud Olmert before tacking to the center in recent years, recently told Haaretz.

Author and translator David Hazony called this "a struggle between two Israels" — one that sees Israel's founding vision as a European-style, rights-based democracy, and the other that sees that vision as the return of the Jews to their ancient homeland.

"Those on the first side believe that the judiciary has always been Israel's protector of rights and therefore of democracy, against the rapaciousness and lawlessness of politicians in general and especially those on the right. Therefore an assault on its supremacy is an assault on democracy itself. They accuse the other side of being barbaric, antidemocratic, and violent," said Hazony, editor of the forthcoming anthology "Jewish Priorities."

As for the other side, he said, they see an activist judiciary as an attempt by Ashkenazi elites to force their minority view on the majority. Supporters of the government think it is entirely unreasonable "for judges to think they can choose their successors, strike down constitutional legislation and rule according to 'that which is reasonable in the eyes of the enlightened community in Israel,'" said Hazony, quoting Aharon Barak, the former president of the Supreme Court of Israel and bane of Israel's right.

(Naveh Dromi, a right-wing columnist for Yediot Achronot, puts this more bluntly: "The problem," she writes, "lies in the fact that the left has no faith in its chance to win an election, so it relies on the high court to represent it.")

Daniel Tauber, an attorney and Likud Central Committee member, agrees that those who voted for Netanyahu and his coalition have their own concerns about a democracy — one dominated by "elites," which in the Israeli context means old-guard Ashkenazi Jews, powerful labor unions and highly educated secular Jews. "The more this process is subject to veto by non-democratic institutions, whether it be the Court chosen as it is, elite military units, the Histadrut [labor union], or others, the more people will lose faith in democracy," said Tauber.

Green also said there is "a war waging now between two elites in Israel" — the "old and more established liberal elite, who consist of the financial, high-tech army, and industry people," and the "new emerging elite of the settlers and the political far-right parties."

And yet, he said, "I think we will lose if one of these elites wins. The real victory of this historic political moment in Israel will be if we achieve true equality, both to the people who are not represented by the Jewish supremacists, such as the Palestinian citizens of Israel, and to the people who are not represented by the 'old Israel,' such as the Haredi and Mizrahi people on the peripheries."

The crises behind the crisis

Although the protests were ignited by Netanyahu's calls for judicial reform, they also represented pushback against the most right-wing government in Israeli history — which means at some level the protests were also about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the role of religion in Israeli society. "The unspoken motivation driving the architects and supporters of the [judicial] 'reform,' as well as the protest leaders, is umbilically connected to the occupation," writes Carolina Landsmann, a Haaretz columnist. If Netanyahu has his way, she writes, "There will be no more two-state solution, and there will be no territorial compromises. The new diplomatic horizon will be a single state, with the Palestinians as subjects deprived of citizenship."

Nimrod Novik, the Israel Fellow at the Israel Policy Forum, said that "once awakened, the simmering resentment of those liberal Israelis about other issues was brought to the surface." The Palestinian issue, for example, is at an "explosive moment," said Novik: The Palestinian Authority is weakened and ineffective, Palestinian youth lack hope for a better future, and Israeli settlers feel emboldened by supporters in the ruling coalition. "The Israeli security establishment took this all into account when warning the government to change course before it is too late," said Novik.

Kurtzer too noted that the Palestinians "also stand to be extremely victimized following the passage of judicial reform, both in Israel and in the West Bank." And yet, he said, most Israelis aren't ready to upend the current status quo between Israelis and Palestinians. "It can also be true that the Israeli public can only build the kind of coalition that it's building right now because it is patently not a referendum on the issue of Palestinian rights," he said.

Religion and state

Novik spoke about another barely subterranean theme of the protests: the growing power of the Haredi, or ultra-Orthodox, parties. Secular Israelis especially resent that the Haredim disproportionately seek exemption from military service and that non-Haredi Israelis contribute some 90% of all taxes collected. One fear of those opposing the judicial reform legislation is that the religious parties will "forever secure state funding to the Haredi Orthodox school system while exempting it from teaching the subjects required for ever joining the workforce. It is to secure for them an exemption from any military or other national service. And it is to expand the imposition of their lifestyle on non-Orthodox Israelis."

What's next

Predictions for the future range from warnings of a civil war (by Israel's president, Isaac Herzog, among others) to an eventual compromise on Netanyahu's part to the emergence of a new center electorate that will reject extremists on both ends of the political spectrum.

David E. Bernstein, a law professor at the George Mason University School of Law who writes frequently about Israel, imagines a future without extremists. "One can definitely easily imagine the business, academic and legal elite using their newfound political voice to insist that future governments not align with extremists, that Haredi authority over national life be limited, and, perhaps most important, that Israel create a formal constitution that protects certain basic rights," he said. "Perhaps there will also be demand to counter such long-festering problems as corruption, disproportionate influence over export markets by a few influential families, burgeoning lawlessness in the Arab sector, and a massive shortage of affordable housing."

Elie Bennett, director of International Strategy at the Israel Democracy Institute, also sees an opportunity in the crisis.

In the aftermath of the disastrous 1973 Yom Kippur War, he said, Israel "rebuilt its military and eventually laid the foundations for today's 'startup nation.' In this current crisis, we do not need a call-up of our reserves forces or a massive airlift of American weaponry to prevail. What we need is goodwill among fellow Israelis and a commitment to work together to strengthen our society and reach an agreed-upon constitutional framework. If we are able to achieve such an agreement, it will protect our rights, better define the relationships between the branches of government, and result in an Israel that is more stable and prosperous than ever as we celebrate 75 years of independence." ■

Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor

fore the kids

8th Annual Golf Outing

MONDAY, AUGUST 14, 2023

THE POLO FIELDS | ANN ARBOR, MI

12:15 PM SHOTGUN
5:30 PM COCKTAILS

FOLLOWED BY
DINNER & RECEPTION

Honoring
LARRY & SUE ADLER

Proceeds provide financial assistance to ensure community families can participate in our early childhood, youth, and camp programs.

Sponsors as of April 10th

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Contact Ariella Monson
Director of Development & Operations
734.971.0990 x 321 ariellamonson@jccannarbor.org

Jewish Federation OF GREATER ANN ARBOR

New community mural adorns the JCC

By Drew Coel, Marketing and Program Associate at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor

The Ann Arbor JCC had a fabulous turnout at the creation of a beautiful community mural on Sunday, April 2. With around 75 people in attendance, ranging from as young as two years old to 90, it was wonderful to see members of the greater Ann Arbor community come together to mingle and participate in the painting of the beautiful mural created by Metro Detroit-based artist, Daniel Cascardo.

The event was complete with delicious light refreshments and the amazing musical talent of Detroit-based musician and producer Stefan Kukurugya, whose tunes made us dance and sing the afternoon away.

Thank you to Daniel, Stefan, and everyone who joined us at this event!

This project was made possible by the Elise Weisbach Visual Arts & Lecture Fund.

Elise Weisbach

To Elise: We thank you for believing in this program and for leading us along with a wonderfully active JCC Art Committee, in the creation and vision of the design and planned activities.

Come back and visit the Ann Arbor JCC in a few weeks to see the finished project! ■

JCC annual golf outing honoring Sue and Larry Adler

Ariella Monson, Director of Development and Operations, JCC

Join us for "Fore the Kids: 8th Annual Golf Outing" on Monday August 14, at Polo Fields Ann Arbor, as we raise scholarship funds for the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor's camp, youth, and early childhood programs. We are thrilled to be honoring Sue and Larry Adler, long-time supporters and friends of the JCC.

Sue and Larry have resided in Ann Arbor for over 30 years, after growing up in the Detroit area. They met when they were 15 years old, through B'nai Brith Youth Organization, and dated throughout high school and college before marrying in 1981. They raised two children, Stephanie and Evan, and welcomed their daughter-in-law Marina to the family in October of 2021. On New Year's Eve 2022, they were blessed with the arrival of their granddaughter, Myla.

Larry joined Huron Gastro in 1989 after completing his gastroenterology training at the Cleveland Clinic. He served as president from 2007 to 2020, and recently retired at the end of 2022.

Sue has been a welcoming fixture at the front desk of the JCC for more than 20 years. She relishes in the interaction with preschool attendees, Hebrew Day School students and staff, and parents, as well as the seniors who enter our building on a daily basis.

The Adlers have been committed members to the Ann Arbor community, notably supporting local Jewish organizations. Collectively they have volunteered and served on the boards and various fundraising committees for Jewish Family Services, Jewish Community Center, Hadassah, B'nai Brith Youth Organization, Chabad, ORT, Beth Israel, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor.

Sue and Larry enjoy traveling, going to movies at the Michigan Theater, and the camaraderie of their friends and extended family. Sue has continued her bowling career that began at MSU, along with mahjong and canasta, while Larry is an avid, yet struggling, golfer. They are so grateful to be part of the wonderful Ann Arbor community and we are lucky to have them.

The annual golf outing provides scholarship funds for all of our youth programs. The JCC's Early Childhood Center is one of the top providers in the area, providing safe, fun, caring, and educational programs for children eight weeks to pre-kindergarten in our community. Camp Raanana, our popular summer day camp for pre-kindergarten to high school aged children, allows campers to experience a fun, safe, and enriching summer. Without the support from community members, we would not be able to offer scholarships to our participants.

Show your support for the JCC and Sue and Larry by becoming a sponsor, making a donation, or joining us for dinner to honor the Adlers. Sponsorship opportunities include a foursome, tee sign, name recognition on marketing materials, lunch and dinner, and start at $1,250. More information about becoming a sponsor or registering for the 8th Annual Golf Outing Fore the Kids can be found online at www.jccannarbor.org, calling 734.971.0990, or reaching out to Ariella Monson, Director of Development and Operations, ariellamonson@jccannarbor.org, ■

TBE Events in May

Events and services are both in-person and/or virtual. Please see www.templebethemeth.org for full details, locations information, and links.

Tot Shabbat Service and Dinner
Fridays at 5:45 p.m.
Join Cantor Hayut and Rabbi Whinston to celebrate Shabbat with fun activities, stories, songs, and age-appropriate learning for children ages 0–5.

Shabbat Service
Fridays at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday Shabbat service
Saturdays at 10 a.m.

Weekday morning blessings
Daily at 9:15 a.m.
Join Rabbi Whinston each weekday morning for a short service of song, poetry, and meditation.

Daily afternoon blessings
Mondays through Thursdays at 3 p.m.
Join Cantor Hayut each afternoon for an intimate short service.

Adult B'nai Mitzvah
Mondays at 5:45 p.m. and Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.
Contact Cantor Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org for details and with questions.

Women's Torah Study
Mondays at 7:30 p.m.
Join Cantor Hayut in an in-depth study and lively discussion of the week's Torah portion. This year, the group will focus on exploring passages that have informed rituals of modern Jewish life.

Twenty-five-minute mindfulness with Jewish spiritual director Linda Greene
Tuesdays at 8:30 a.m.
Zoom room opens at 8:15 a.m. for optional check-in. Blessing and intention setting 8:30–8:35 a.m. Meditate 8:35–9 a.m. Start your day centered and connected.

Talmud Tuesdays with Rabbi Alter
Tuesdays at 11 a.m. or 8 p.m.
Both meetings discuss the same material. Join Rabbi Alter to discover the Talmud, the formative collection of stories and discussions that defined the post-Temple Judaism that continues today! Together, explore the foundations of our contemporary Jewish ethics, beliefs, and practices, as well as some tremendous tales about our ancient rabbis! Join anytime! All materials are provided*. (*It is recommended that you read *If All the Seas Were Ink* by Ilana Kurshan, but it's not required or expected.)

Cantor's (Jewish) Book Club with Cantor Hayut
Thursdays at 11 a.m.
Join Cantor Hayut to read and discuss books of Jewish interest a few chapters at a time. This year, the book group will be reading primarily, although not exclusively, works by Israeli authors. For more information or questions, please contact Cantor Hayut.

Back Door Food Pantry
Thursdays, 4–7 p.m.

Meditation with Claire Weiner
Thursdays at 5 p.m.
Join Claire Weiner for a 40-minute meditation session

Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Whinston
Fridays at 12 p.m.
Bring your lunch and learn with Rabbi Whinston during this informal and social gathering. We explore different ideas throughout the year with participants guiding our subjects.

Shabbat morning Torah study
Saturdays at 8:50 a.m.
Join us for this weekly discussion of the Torah portion.

3rd Annual Social Action Committee Congregational Read
Thursdays, May 4–June 1, 7 p.m.
Registration requested: www.templebethemeth.org
Join the Temple Beth Emeth (TBE) Social Action Committee for our annual congregational read, *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Potawatomi author Robin Wall Kimmerer, which weaves together indigenous knowledge with science in a moment of climate urgency. In person and online.

First Annual A2 Climate Teach-in
Sunday, May 7, 1:30 p.m.
Free. Registration required: https://www.a2climateteachin.com/
Wondering what you could possibly do to help address the climate crisis? Ann Arbor Mayor Christopher Taylor will start this teach-in by addressing how individuals and groups can participate in A2Zero — the City of Ann Arbor's plan for achieving a just transition to community-wide carbon neutrality by 2030. Interactive breakout sessions: What cost incentives are out there to help you go green on a budget?; How can you get involved in local advocacy?; Strategies for moving to a lifestyle with less waste/less meat consumption/less environmental impact; How you or your congregation or civic group might get involved in local climate justice.

Elementary Shabbat Service and Dinner
Friday, May 12, 5:45 p.m.
Join Cantor Hayut to celebrate Shabbat with fun activities, stories, songs, and age-appropriate learning for children ages 5–10. Registration requested.

Bereavement Group
Tuesday, May 16, 4 p.m.
The group will have opportunities to share openly about their process of grieving and will also have topic-based readings to spark discussion.

Reducing Your Carbon Footprint: Local Transportation Systems
Wednesday, May 17, 7:30 p.m.
Part of a series of free Zoom workshops. Details and registration at www.climateherostories.com. Speakers: Praveen Mahendran, Michigan Climate Venture: "Intersecting ClimateTech and Venture Capital"; Gigi Norcross, Green Century Funds: "Greening Your Investments"; Mark Grossman, 350 Silicon Valley and Congregation Beth Am: "Aligning Financial Values with Religious Values"; Stephen Modell, University of Michigan School of Public Health: "Investing for the Planet with Variety"; Workshop Host: Stephen Modell, University of Michigan School of Public Health.

Aging Solo
Thursday, May 18, 4 p.m.
Join us for discussion, support, and snacks at the Jewish Community Center.

LGBTQ Shabbat Potluck
Friday, May 19, 6 p.m.
Join us for a Shabbat dinner and candle lighting with members of the local queer community! Bring a dish to share with others, make new friends and let us know what you'd like to see in future queer programming! Temple Beth Emeth is launching a new queer affinity group, and we'd like to invite others to join! We're starting things off with our first LGBTQ Shabbat Potluck, an opportunity to expand our community and to share what you'd like to experience moving forward. Join us for a candle lighting and meal with the local community in our Adult Lounge and help us craft a group that meets all our needs. In order to make sure we can feed everyone, please respond to this survey (https://bit.ly/tbelgbtq) or email Ariane Smith at brariane@umich.edu with the dish you're planning to bring.

Women's Rosh Chodesh Circle
Monday, May 22, 5 p.m.

Shavuot Festival Services
Friday, May 26, 9:15 a.m. ■

Census of the Jewish people

Rabbi Aharon Goldstein, Chabad of Ann Arbor

On the Shabbat of May 20, we will read the Torah portion of Bamidbar. We read about how Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of the tribes conducted a census of the Jewish people at G-d's command. "Take a census of the congregation of the Children of Israel ... you and

Aaron ... and with you there shall be a man of every tribe."

Counting the number of citizens who reside in a particular country is something that is done all over the world. There are no stringent requirements for becoming a census-taker; anyone may do so.

A census-taker goes to each house writing down the number of residents on a special form. Other pertinent details are also recorded: a person's age, their occupation, etc. After tabulating all the data, the exact number of residents in the country is arrived at.

The census of the Jewish people in the desert, however, was conducted in an entirely different manner. The census-takers were not unemployed or simple folk; rather, they were the most important people in the entire nation — Moses, Aaron, and the heads of each tribe!

Moses was asked by G-d to conduct the census. G-d wanted Moses, the consummate Jewish leader and teacher of Torah, to abandon all his other affairs and go from tent to tent, counting the number of Jews over the age of 20!

But why was Moses chosen for the task? Why did it have to be Moses, Aaron, and the tribal leaders — the Jews with the highest status — who conducted the census?

The answer is that appointing only the most prominent individuals expressed the intrinsic value and tremendous significance of the Jewish people. Counting Jews is an act of great consequence; not just anyone is permitted to do so. Each and every Jew is so precious that only people with the stature of a Moses, an Aaron, or a leader of a tribe may take their number.

Conducting a census of Jews is not a secular activity, it is a holy one. Every single Jew is holy, a "veritable part of G-d above," and counting the members of a holy nation is a mitzva (commandment). This was reflected in the way the census was taken. The census-takers were required to wear their Shabbat finery as they made their rounds from tent to tent. The census was a serious affair.

Counting, in and of itself, is a mundane task, but when it comes to counting Jews it is a holy matter.

So too is it with all the worldly affairs and daily activities of the Jew. Because of his unique spiritual nature, even his mundane activities take on a higher significance. Eating, drinking, managing a Jewish household, and educating one's children — all these are uplifted and transformed into holy pursuits, for each and every Jew is invaluable to G-d. ■

Shavuot: Cold soups, non-cheesecakes, and more

Lonnie Sussman, special to the WJN

How do you mark time? I've been thinking a lot about how I mark time. I've just returned from a trip to Morocco, a trip that was more than three years in the planning and flew by in a minute. If you have children, do you constantly think of them as babies, toddlers, and then find it remarkable that they are taller than you and may even have babies of their own?

Well, sometimes I think about the Jewish holidays and how quickly they arrive on the calendar and how quickly I forget (delay) to prepare. Shavuot is an important holiday, only two days long outside the land of Israel, and there are few restrictions and only a few traditions on home celebrations. It marks the traditional giving of the Torah, seven weeks after Pesach. It also marks the spring harvest, especially of the wheat.

Shavuot was one of the three pilgrimage holidays in Temple times. They are often called "Festivals" and I always imagine huge crowds of people walking to Jerusalem to celebrate the first harvests of the spring, sharing food, and having a great time. I'm not forgetting the prayers they came to the Temple to say but I am saying this was a joyous time. The traditions of dairy foods came from a few sources. Whatever your traditions are I hope they are tasty as well as meaningful. Here are some ideas for meals, some are traditional and some are not, but they all seem to me to be in the spirit of the Shavuot festival.

Cold Cherry Soup

The Jewish Holiday Kitchen, by Joan Nathan

I first had a cold fruit soup at my dad's first cousin's house in B'er Sheva, many decades ago. It was a hot day, and the cold soup was delicious, cooling, and a completely new experience for me. When I was young, the cold soup served at Shavuot and all summer was borscht. Cherry soup was the soup for the Jews with a Hungarian background and borscht was part of Eastern European Jewish traditions.

- 2 20-ounce cans or 2 pounds of fresh pitted sour cherries
- 1 cup sugar, or to taste
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 cup dry red wine (optional)

Drain the cherries, retaining the juice in a saucepan. Set the cherries aside. Add enough water to the juice to make 3 cups. Add the sugar and the cinnamon stick. Bring to a boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar, and add the cherries. Partially cover and simmer over low heat for about 10–15 minutes. Remove the cinnamon stick and blend the soup until it is smooth. Return to the heat and bring to a boil. Then cool the soup a bit and add the sour cream, letting it dissolve. Chill. If you want the wine, add it just before serving. You can also add another dollop of the sour cream to each bowl.

Wolfie's Borscht

The Jewish Holiday Kitchen, by Joan Nathan

Serves 10.

This recipe originally came from Wolfie's Restaurant in Miami Beach.

Borscht, or beet soup, is a Ukrainian tradition. In the warmer months it was served cold and in the winter months it was served hot. This recipe is dairy, as befits the dairy holiday of Shavuot. In the winter it was served with meat. If you don't like beets, you might try Schav, another soup from eastern Europe served cold in the springtime, when schav (sorrel, a tart green leafed plant) first comes up. In the winter it is served hot, in a soup with vegetables. If you don't like your soups red or green but can get over that prejudice to try something new, try Borscht. Save the Schav for next year.

- 2 ½ lb beets, peeled and diced or quartered
- 1 onion, sliced
- 1 stalk celery, chopped
- 2 ½ quarts water
- ½ to 1 cup sugar
- A pinch of sour salt (citric acid) or 1 tbs lemon juice
- Salt to taste
- 6 eggs, cracked and placed in a bowl and whisked until smooth
- Sour cream
- Sour cream and dill, optional

Simmer the beets, onion and celery in the water, covered, for about 40 minutes or until the beets are tender. Add the sugar and sour salt or lemon juice. Then, puree in a blender. Add the salt to taste. The juice will keep for several days in the refrigerator. Return to a pot and simmer again. Add 1 cup of soup to the eggs and slowly beat the eggs into the rest of the soup. Let cool before serving with a dollop of sour cream and dill (optional but pretty).

Tonno Fresco con Piselli, Fresh Tuna with Peas

Cucina Ebraica, by Joyce Goldstein

Serves 3–4 so maybe good for a more intimate dinner unless you double the recipe.

I have written about recipes from this cookbook a few times. It was originally printed in 1998. The author lived in San Francisco where she owned a restaurant, was a cooking instructor and cookbook writer. This recipe appeals to me because I like tuna and I like peas and I like stories about the Italian Jewish history and community.

- 1¼ pounds tuna fillet
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 4 tbs olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, finely minced
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 3 tbs chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1 cup diced canned plum tomatoes
- Water or white wine, as needed
- 2 pounds English peas, shelled, or 2 cups green peas, frozen

Sprinkle the salt and pepper on the tuna. Warm the olive oil in a sauté pan over medium heat. Add the garlic, onion, and parsley and sauté for a few minutes but don't allow them to turn color. Add the tuna and cook on one side until half-cooked, about 4 minutes. Remove the tuna from the pan and set aside. Add the tomatoes, 1 cup of water or wine, and the peas. Cover and simmer over medium heat until the peas are tender, 8–10 minutes. Return the tuna to the pan, uncooked side down. Cook until done to taste, about 4 minutes for medium. Serve by placing the tuna on a platter and spoon the peas and tomatoes over the top. Another version of this dish is found in the *Italian Jewish Cookbook* by Edda Servi Machlin. She uses salmon and omits the tomatoes.

Sesame Asparagus and Carrot Chop

Smitten Kitchen Keepers, by Deb Perelman

Serves 2–3 but I plan on making this for 6–8.

Deb Perelman has now written 3 cookbooks with this one being the latest. I discovered her from her food blog "Smitten Kitchen" and have enjoyed all her cookbooks. The recipes can be trusted and are usually pretty simple to make. Since Michigan asparagus arrives fresh in May this will be a go-to salad. It's not something I've seen as traditional Shavuot food, but it appeals to me because it's very much in the spirit of spring.

- ½ pound asparagus (makes this recipe easy to double)
- ½ pound carrots, slim if you can find them
- 2 tbs unseasoned rice vinegar
- Kosher salt to taste
- 2 tbs mayonnaise
- 2 tsp toasted sesame oil
- 2 tsp Sriracha
- 2 tsp low sodium soy sauce
- 1 large firm-ripe avocado, diced
- Toasted black and/or white sesame seeds, for garnish

Cut the asparagus and carrots diagonally into thin slices. Place in a large bowl and dress with the rice vinegar and a few pinches of salt. Combine the mayonnaise, sesame oil, sriracha and soy sauce in a small bowl. Whisk until smooth. When you are ready to eat add the dressing to the vegetables and stir to coat thoroughly. Add the diced avocados and gently mix into the salad. Taste for seasonings and garnish, if you like, with the sesame seeds.

Ricotta Gnocchi with tomato sauce

NYTimes Cooking, recipe by Mark Bittman

Serves 4.

He is a famous food writer but not necessarily a Jewish food writer with an expertise on Jewish foods. This recipe, like many others I've seen, includes a light cheese product that is not a kugel. I'm going to make it. How about you?

- 1 15-oz container ricotta cheese, preferably whole milk
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 ¼ freshly grated Parmesan plus more for serving
- Freshly ground black pepper
- ¾ to 1 cup flour
- 3 tbs unsalted butter
- 10 or more sage leaves

Bring a large pot of water to a boil and salt it. Combine the ricotta, eggs and Parmesan in a large bowl, along with some salt and pepper. Add about ½ cup flour and stir. Add more flour until the mixture forms a very sticky dough. Scoop up a spoonful of dough and boil it to make sure it holds its shape. If it doesn't, add in more flour. Meanwhile, place the butter in a large skillet over medium heat. When it melts and turns a nutty brown color, add the sage. While it fries, drop the ricotta mixture by the rounded tablespoon into the boiling water, working in batches of 6 or so at a time so as not to crowd the pot. When the gnocchi rise to the surface, remove with a slotted spoon and transfer to the skillet. When all the gnocchi are done, toss, taste and adjust the seasoning and serve. This is good with a tomato sauce or even pistachio pesto or another topping of your choice.

Plum Cake

Jewish Holiday Cakes, by Hana Shaulov

350 degrees, 40–50 minutes

Honestly, I love a good cheesecake and there are a million recipes easily found online. There are plain cheesecakes, chocolate, lemon, striped, caramel, no bake and I can't even tell you how many more. Here's an alternative cake that is dairy, or could be made with margarine or another non-dairy substitute.

Filling

- 20 plums and about 6 tbs sugar or to your taste

Batter

- 6 ½ oz butter, softened
- 1 ¾ cups sugar
- 4 eggs, separated
- 1 tbs vanilla
- 1 tbs lemon juice
- 1 ¾ cups self-rising flour

Halve and stone the fruit. Sprinkle with sugar and set aside. Beat together the butter or margarine and 1 cup of sugar until smooth. Then gradually beat in the egg yolks, vanilla, lemon juice, and flour. In a separate bowl beat the egg whites, gradually adding the remaining ¾ cups of sugar, until stiff. Gently fold the beaten egg whites into the yolk mixture until no trace of white remains. Pour the batter into a greased 10x13 pan and arrange the halved plums on top. Bake the cake for 40–50 minutes until it is done.

Semolina Delight

Cook in Israel, by Orly Ziv

Here's another non-cream cheesecake. It's easy, tasty and worth a look and a nosh.

- 2 cups milk
- 4 tbs fine semolina
- 3 tbs sugar
- ½ tbs rose water
- Almonds, optional

Put the milk, semolina and sugar in a pot and bring to a boil, stirring occasionally. Add the rose water and keep stirring constantly over a low flame for 2–3 minutes, until the mixture thickens. Pour into a serving platter, bowl, or rimmed baking sheet. Mark the serving portions with a knife. Decorate each portion with an almond, if you like. Allow the cake to cool, cover and allow to set in the refrigerator before serving. ■

Famous and familiar faces

By Judith Endelman, Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival Executive Committee Member

"Call My Agent," "Shtisel," "The Bureau" — these are just a few of the international productions we have come to enjoy in the new world of streaming. We have also come to recognize and appreciate some wonderful actors as they appear in one production and then another. Wasn't that detective in "Spiral" the same actor who played businessman Raymond Schwartz in "A French Village" (Thierry Godard)? And wasn't the actor who played Ruchama Weiss, the young daughter in "Shtisel," the same actor who starred in "Unorthodox" (Shira Haas)?

You may have noticed some of these same fine international actors popping up in the films shown at the Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival. For example, did you recognize the Israeli actor Michael Aloni who played the marriageable son Akiva in "Shtisel" when he appeared in *Plan A*, a film in last year's festival? He played one of the leaders of a plot to poison the water system in Germany at the end of the Second World War. Similarly, in *Rose*, another film from last year's festival, Gregory Montel played Pierre Goldberg, a son of the widowed Rose. You might have previously seen him as Gabriel Sarda in the popular Netflix series, "Call My Agent," about the ups and downs of a Parisian talent agency.

As you settle in to watch this year's films, here are a few well-known actors to watch.

The three main characters in *Farewell, Mr. Haffmann*, our opening night film, are all well-known and respected French

actors — Daniel Auteuil who plays Joseph Haffman, Sara Giraudeau who plays Blanche Mercier, and Giles Lellouche who plays Francois Mercier. You may have seen Daniel Auteuil in the films *Jean de Florette* with Yves Montand and Gerard Depardieu or *Hidden* with Juliette Binoche. Sara Giraudeau played an undercover spy in "The Bureau" (the French equivalent of the CIA) and Giles Lellouche starred in *Tell No One*, a film currently streaming on Prime Video.

The popular Italian actor Riccardo Scamarcio has leading roles in two of this years' films. In *Where Life Begins*, he plays a Sicilian farmer who befriends a young Haredi woman visiting with her family. And in *Shadow of the Day*, he plays a restaurant manager in 1938 Italy who unwittingly hires a young Jewish woman with forged papers. In addition to his many Italian films, Scamarcio appeared (as a hotel robber) in Woody Allen's comedy *To Rome with Love*. More recently, he has appeared in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 of the *John Wick* films.

Well-known American actors have also shown up in some of our film festival offerings. We have enjoyed watching Elliott Gould in the past and last year, the late Edward Asner gave a touching performance as a Holocaust survivor who rescues a young runaway from the streets of Los Angeles in *The Tiger Within*.

This year, we can relish the veteran film actors Judd Hirsch and Carol Kane playing an aging couple living in Florida in the domestic comedy *iMordecai*.

As you watch this year's films, see if you can spot some other familiar faces.

To learn more about the 2023 Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival and sponsorship opportunities, please visit jccannarbor.org. Any and all contributions are greatly appreciated! ■

Ayse's CAFÉ™
Turkish Dine-In / Take-Out / Catering
Mother's Day Brunch
Sunday, May 14, 2023
Full Buffet, $35/person
Father's Day Dinner
Saturday, June 17, 2023
Reservations: Ayse at
734-662-1711 or ayse@aysescafe.com
.... Check our Music Nights ....
Mon - Sat 12:00 -8:00 pm
www.aysescafe.com
Facebook • Instagram

Calendar

May 2023

As our community eases into in-person events with sensitivity to changing pandemic safety, always check websites or call for updates before planning to attend anything listed here and for prayer services.

Monday 1

Talmud Study with Rabbi Dobrusin (via Zoom): BIC. All are invited to join our Talmud study class. We will read the text in Hebrew or Aramaic with an accompanying English translation and all discussions will be in English so no familiarity with Hebrew is required. 4 p.m.

Adult B'nai Mitzvah: TBE. For inquiries, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 5:45 p.m.

Women's Torah Study: TBE. For questions, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 7:30 p.m.

Monday 2

Twenty-five-minute Mindfulness with Jewish Spiritual Director Linda Greene: TBE and Pardes Hannah. 8:30 a.m.

Talmud Tuesdays w/ Rabbi Alter: TBE. 11 a.m. and 8 p.m.

Adult B'nai Mitzvah: TBE. For inquiries, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 6:30 p.m.

Schmooze and Booze: Fed. Join Women's Philanthropy for an evening out! We'll schmooze, booze and just have a chance to enjoy each other's company, with a chance to get to know people throughout the community HOMES Campus, 112 Jackson Plaza Register at jewishannarobr.org 7 p.m.

Tea and Torah for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m.

Wednesday 3

Yiddish tish: (Virtual) (Yiddish Conversation & Reading Group): Zoom. About 45 minutes each of conversation and reading. Free and open to all those interested in Yiddish language, literature, and culture, no matter what level of proficiency. For more information, to get the link, and to make certain that we are meeting on a specific day, email Elliot H. Gertel at egertel@umich.edu at least one day before scheduled meeting day every Wednesday (except major Jewish holidays). 2 p.m.

WTBE Gift Shop Open for In-Person Shopping: TBE. Washtenaw County's Only Judaica Shop! 4–6 p.m.

Theology Book Club: BIC 8 p.m.

Thursday 4

Cantor's (Jewish) Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 11 a.m.

Backdoor Food Pantry Open: TBE. 4–7 p.m.

Meditation with Claire Weiner: TBE. 5 p.m.

3rd Annual Social Action Committee Congregational Read: TBE. Braiding Sweetgrass by Potawatomi author Robin Wall Kimmerer, which weaves together indigenous knowledge with science in a moment of climate urgency. Registration requested. In person and Online. 7 p.m.

Talmud: Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m.

Friday 5

Candle Lighting 8:20 p.m. Emor

Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Whinston: TBE. 12 p.m.

WTBE Gift Shop Open for In-Person Shopping: TBE. Washtenaw County's Only Judaica Shop! 6–7:30 p.m.

Saturday 6 *Havdallah 9:26 p.m.*

Torah Study: TBE. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion. 8:50–9:50 a.m.

Sunday 7

Tanya: Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. 11 a.m.

First Annual A2 Climate Teach-in: TBE.

Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival Opening Event. *Farewell Mr. Haffman*. State Theater. 4 p.m.

Monday 8

Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival: See schedule pages 14 and 15.

Talmud Study with Rabbi Dobrusin (via Zoom): BIC. 4 p.m.

Adult B'nai Mitzvah: TBE. For inquiries, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 5:45 p.m.

Women's Torah Study: TBE. For questions, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday 9 *Lag B'Omer*

Twenty-five-minute Mindfulness with Jewish Spiritual Director Linda Greene: TBE and Pardes Hannah. 8:30 a.m.

Talmud Tuesdays w/ Rabbi Alter: TBE. 11 a.m. and 8 p.m.

Ann Arbor Chapter of ORT America Donor Dinner, at TBE. With special speaker, Amos Gofer, director of ORT's Kfar Silver Youth Village in southern Israel. For inquiries, contact Joan Levitt at jflevitt2@gmail.com. 6 p.m.

Adult B'nai Mitzvah: TBE. For inquiries, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 6:30 p.m.

Lag B'Omer Picnic: Chabad. Time TBA.

Wednesday 10

Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival: See schedule pages 14 and 15.

Yiddish tish Conversation & Reading Group: Every Wednesday, see above. 2 p.m.

WTBE Gift Shop Open for In-Person Shopping: TBE. 4–6 p.m.

Theology Book Club: BIC 8 p.m.

Thursday 11

Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival: See schedule pages 14 and 15.

Cantor's (Jewish) Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 11 a.m.

Backdoor Food Pantry Open: TBE. 4–7 p.m.

3rd Annual Social Action Committee Congregational Read: .

Meditation with Claire Weiner: TBE. 5 p.m.

Talmud: Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m.

Friday 1 2 *Candle Lighting 8:20 p.m. Behar-Bechukotai*

Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Whinston: TBE. 12 p.m.

Elementary Shabbat and Dinner: TBE. Ages 5–10. Registration requested. $5 per person. 5:45 p.m.

WTBE Gift Shop Open for In-Person Shopping: TBE. Washtenaw County's Only Judaica Shop! 6–7:30 p.m.

Saturday13 *Havdallah 9:35 p.m.*

Torah Study: TBE. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion. 8:50–9:50 a.m.

Second Saturday Morning Shabbat Service. AARC at the JCC. This is a lay-led hybrid Shabbat Service at the JCC. Everyone is welcome! Zoom link will be sent out the week before the event. 10:30 a.m. to noon.

Tot Shabbat: BIC. Join us for a playful morning of Jewish songs, games, and stories. Challah and grape juice kiddush included. For kids ages 1 through 1st grade, but all are welcome to join. 10:30 a.m.

Shabbat Schmooze: BIC. We invite our older elementary students (2nd–5th grade) to join us for some ice breakers, challah and juice, traditional Shabbat prayers, weekly Torah portion activities, and time with friends both old and new. 10:30 a.m.

Sunday 14

Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival: See schedule pages 14 and 15.

Tanya: Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. 11 a.m.

Monday 15

Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival: See schedule pages 14 and 15.

Talmud Study with Rabbi Dobrusin (via Zoom): BIC. 4 p.m.

Adult B'nai Mitzvah: TBE. For inquiries, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 5:45 p.m.

Women's Torah Study: TBE. For questions, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday 16

Twenty-five-minute Mindfulness with Jewish Spiritual Director Linda Greene: TBE and Pardes Hannah. 8:30 a.m.

Talmud Tuesdays w/ Rabbi Alter: TBE. 11 a.m. and 8 p.m.

Bereavement Group: TBE. For women who have lost a life partner. 4 p.m.

Adult B'nai Mitzvah: TBE. For inquiries, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 6:30 p.m.

Tea and Torah for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m.

Wednesday 17

Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival: See schedule pages 14 and 15.

Yiddish tish Conversation & Reading Group: Every Wednesday, see above. 2 p.m.

WTBE Gift Shop Open for In-Person Shopping: TBE. 4–6 p.m.

Reducing Your Carbon Footprint: Investments In Our Planet: TBE. On Zoom. Registration required for the Zoom link. Speakers: Praveen Mahendran, Michigan Climate Venture: Intersecting ClimateTech and Venture Capital; Gigi Norcross, Green Century Funds: Greening Your Investments; Mark Grossman, 350 Silicon Valley and Congregation Beth Am: Aligning Financial Values with Religious Values; Stephen Modell, UMich School of Public Health: Investing for the Planet with Variety; Workshop Host: Stephen Modell, U of M School of Public Health. 7:30 p.m.

Theology Book Club: BIC 8 p.m.

Thursday 18

Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival: See schedule pages 14 and 15.

Cantor's (Jewish) Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 11 a.m.

Backdoor Food Pantry Open: TBE. 4–7 p.m.

Aging Solo: TBE, BIC, JCC, JFS. At the JCC, Newman Lounge. 4 p.m.

Meditation with Claire Weiner: TBE. 5 p.m.

3rd Annual Social Action Committee Congregational Read: TBE. . 7 p.m.

Talmud: Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m.

Friday 19 *Candle Lighting 8:35 p.m. Bamidbar*

Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Whinston: TBE. 12 p.m.

Aura of Kabbalat Shabbat: BIC. A Jewish Renewal inspired singing service led by Rabbi Aura Ahuvia. All are welcome to attend. 6 p.m.

LGBTQ Shabbat Potluck: TBE. Join us for a Shabbat dinner and candle lighting. Bring a dish to share with others, make new friends, and let us know what you'd like to see in future queer programming! Registration requested.

Saturday 20 *Havdallah 9:43 p.m.*

Torah Study: TBE. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion. 8:50–9:50 a.m.

Saturday 21 *Rosh Hodesh Sivan*

Rosh Chodesh Sivan Online Minyan: Pardes Hannah. 10 a.m.

Volunteer Appreciation Brunch: BIC. All volunteers, past, present, and yet to be inspired, are cordially invited to enjoy fresh homemade. We are especially proud to welcome "Adamah Detroit" (formerly Hazon Detroit) for a dialogue program focused on Jewish identity and the climate. 9:45 a.m.

Tanya: Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. 11 a.m.

Rosh Hodesh Sivan Circle: Pardes Hannah. 7 p.m.

Monday 22

Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival: See schedule pages 14 and 15.

Talmud Study with Rabbi Dobrusin (via Zoom): BIC. 4 p.m.

Women's Rosh Chodesh Circle: TBE. In person and on Zoom. 5 p.m.

Adult B'nai Mitzvah: TBE. For inquiries, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 5:45 p.m.

Women's Torah Study: TBE. For questions, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday 23

Twenty-five-minute Mindfulness with Jewish Spiritual Director Linda Greene: TBE and Pardes Hannah. 8:30 a.m.

Talmud Tuesdays w/ Rabbi Alter: TBE. 11 a.m. and 8 p.m.

Adult B'nai Mitzvah: TBE. For inquiries, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 6:30 p.m.

Tea and Torah for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m.

Wednesday 24

Yiddish tish Conversation & Reading Group: Every Wednesday, see above. 2 p.m.

WTBE Gift Shop Open for In-Person Shopping: TBE. 4–6 p.m.

Theology Book Club: BIC 8 p.m.

Thursday 25

Cantor's (Jewish) Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 11 a.m.

Backdoor Food Pantry Open: TBE. 4–7 p.m.

Meditation with Claire Weiner: TBE. 5 p.m.

3rd Annual Social Action Committee Congregational Read: . 7 p.m.

Tikkun Leil Shavuot: BIC. Watch our calendar and email announcements for details about this year's Tikkun Leil Shavuot. 8 p.m.

Shavuot: Chabad. Afternoon and evening services, followed by festive meal and all night learning. 8:45 p.m.

Friday 26

Candle Lighting 8:42 p.m.

Shavuot Festival Services: TBE. 9:15 a.m.

Shavuot Morning Service: BIC. 9:30 a.m.

Shavuot morning services: Chabad. All children are invited to come and hear the Ten Commandments, Ice Cream party for the children, and then followed by our annual festive dairy meal for everyone, 9:45 a.m.

WTBE Gift shop open for In-person shopping: TBE. In the TBE Gift Shop. 6 – 7:30 p.m.

Home Shabbat: From the Rabbi's Table to Yours: BIC. Join Rav Nadav and his family for Kabbalat Shabbat over Zoom (only) from their Shabbat table to yours on the last Friday of each month. 5:40 p.m. for conversation and visiting. 6 p.m.

Fourth Friday Kabbalat Shabbat. AARC. In person at the JCC and on Zoom. This is a hybrid service led by members of the congregation. 6:30 p.m.

Saturday 27

Havdallah 9:51 p.m.

Torah Study: TBE. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion. 8:50–9:50 a.m.

Shavuot Morning with Yizkor: BIC. 9:30 a.m.

Shavuot: Chabad. Morning services — 9:45 a.m., Yizkor Memorial Services — 11 a.m.

Tot Shabbat: BIC. 10:30 a.m.

Shabbat Schmooze: BIC. We invite our older elementary students. 10:30 a.m.

Sunday 28

Tanya: Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. 11 a.m.

Monday 29

Adult B'nai Mitzvah: TBE. For inquiries, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 5:45 p.m.

Women's Torah Study: TBE. For questions, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday 30

Twenty-five-minute Mindfulness with Jewish Spiritual Director Linda Greene: TBE and Pardes Hannah. 8:30 a.m.

Talmud Tuesdays w/ Rabbi Alter: TBE. 11 a.m. and 8 p.m.

Adult B'nai Mitzvah: TBE. For inquiries, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 6:30 p.m.

Tea and Torah for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m.

Wednesday 31

Yiddish tish Conversation & Reading Group: Every Wednesday, see above. 2 p.m.

WTBE Gift Shop Open for In-Person Shopping: TBE. 4–6 p.m.

Annual Meeting: Fed. At the JCC. 7 p.m.

Charles Weaver eulogy for Tamar Weaver

Tamar was sui generis — there was no one like her. Although she hated it when I used Latin expressions.

She was one of the first babies born in Beilinson Hospital in Petach Tikvah, Palestine, in 1936. Her parents were kibbutzniks Moshe and Ruth Fishler, who left their kibbutz to provide medical treatment for her older sister that the kibbutz refused to provide.

Her mother came to Israel from Vienna as a sort of hippy who worked on The Women's Farm collective and volunteered on archaeological digs with Professor Eleazar Sukenik,

who helped establish the Department of Archaeology at the Hebrew University. Tamar's mother ended up on Kibbutz Beit Alfa, the first HaShomer kibbutz, of which Tamar's father was one of the founders. He was originally from Lvov, Ukraine. He was also one of the group that discovered the Beit Alfa mosaic (in a synagogue dated from the 6th century) while digging drainage ditches.

When Tamar was four the family returned to Beit Alfa. On the bus ride there she saw mountains for the first time and thought the people on them were little dolls. She prospered there in the Children's House, where the children were raised separately from their parents. When she was a teen she played the violin and was a member of the Gadna orchestra. She played in the concert in which Daniel Barenboim had his Israel premier as a pianist.

After the army, Tamar wanted to attend university, but the kibbutz discouraged it, and did not prepare their students for the matriculation exams. So, she studied for them by herself late at night while working as a kibbutz member. To prepare for the tanach exam, she took a correspondence course taught by Nehama Leibovitz. The worksheets for this course are still in use today for bible study. She studied math and physics at the Hebrew University. The kibbutz gave her only two years instead of three and insisted she also study biology. She completed her degree only days before her first child, Hagai, was born. She returned to the kibbutz to teach at the Mossad regional high school. She had her second child, Asa, around that time.

Shortly after, Tamar, along with her first husband and kids, left the kibbutz because they felt discriminated against as academics. They moved to Afula where she taught high school math. They then moved to Jerusalem so that her husband could get his doctorate. She worked as a programmer for the Jerusalem future traffic plan project, which is ironic because driving through Jerusalem is so chaotic, and maybe she had something to do with that.

Her marriage broke up in 1971 and her first husband moved to the University of Illinois at Champaign Urbana. She followed him there with the possibility of reconciliation that never happened.

In 1973 Tamar and I both worked at the PLATO project, developing computer-based instruction. This was years before personal computers and the internet. My coworker saw us as two single Jewish people each with two sons, and arranged for us to meet. A year later we were married. We lived in a blended family with her sons Asa and Hagai, and my two sons David and Ben. Seven years later, after several miscarriages, she gave birth to our youngest, ill.

In 1982 we decided to move to Israel. Tamar's parents were both sick, and her son who was living with his father was starting his army service (it also happened to be the beginning of the first Lebanon war). It was a different time and Israel was not the modern place it is today. It was an exciting time in terms of computer technology development. I barely knew Hebrew.

After six years living there, Tamar's parents had both passed away and her son had completed his army service. We had had enough and decided to return to the United States.

I found a temporary position at the University of Michigan. After a year we were both working as programmers. Tamar worked mainly implementing human interfaces to machines. Among other things, she wrote programs that controlled the radiation machines for the radiation oncology department at the U of M Hospital, and programs that controlled machines that balanced brakes and other moving automobile parts.

After she retired, she took courses at Washtenaw Community College, first in drawing (which she was actually quite good at) and then computer courses. Also, even though she wasn't religious, she studied with Rabbi Glogower and Rabbi Dobrusin, as well as Esther Goldstein and Liz Fried.

Tamar was the one who encouraged me to start keeping kosher and was very careful in following the rules even though she sometimes ate non-kosher food. She was on the Beth Israel Social action committee, led several blood drives, she was an active advocate for Palestinians, and even on one trip to Israel participated in the weekly protest against the separation wall in the Palestinian village Bilin, much to the dismay of her Israeli relatives.

In short, she was a sabra through and through, prickly on the outside, usually sweet on the inside.

Tamar didn't just like things — she was passionate about them and sometimes had cravings for certain foods. Some were from her childhood, like Crembo, elite bittersweet chocolate, chocolate covered orange peels, and a very simple kind of chips that contained caraway seeds that probably no longer exist in today's more sophisticated Israel. While we lived in Israel we went a couple of times to forage for pine mushrooms to make a simple dish of potatoes, eggs, onions and mushrooms, which she continued to eat frequently. One year we went to New Orleans and ate gumbo, and for a long time after she would make it frequently, at first with seafood, and later with chicken. She also loved guava and anona (cherimoya).

A few years ago I took an online course on modern Hebrew poetry at the Hebrew University. I asked her if she knew the poet Dahlia Ravikovitch. Meaning, was she familiar with her work. She replied that she didn't know her, but she knew her sister. Then I asked about the poet Meir Wieseltier. It turns out that he lived next door to her and her husband when they were students at the university, and they called him the "young poet." I thought it was so cool that she knew all these famous poets and artists and was so nonchalant about it all.

Tamar loved all of her grandkids, Aya, Itamar, Berit, Max, Rune, and the youngest, Alexander.

She came from an almost anti-religious kibbutz background, but had a collection of favorite sayings from Jewish Sources:

פִּרְצָה קוֹרֵאת לַגַּנָּב

A hole in the wall cries out to the thief.
(Which means: Don't tempt people to commit a crime)

יודע צדיק נפש בהמתו

The holy man knows the soul of his beast
(To explain how she knew exactly how to fix something)

או יותר מאשר העגל רוצה לינוק, הפרה רוצה להניק

The cow wants to nurse more than the calf wants to drink.
(When I wanted to tell her something she wasn't interested in.)

And her all-time favorite saying:

עַל טַעַם וְעַל רֵיחַ אֵין לְהִתְוַכֵּחַ

You can't argue about taste and smell

Tamar was a force of nature like no one else, and I will always love her. ■

Simchas and Sorrows

The Washtenaw Jewish community sends condolences to:

Jack (Stephanie) Zaientz on the death of his father Joseph Zaientz, grandfather of Eva and Lila Zaientz. March 11.

Bob Ravin on the death of his wife Joan Ravin, mother of Debra (Jerry) Rosenberg, Barbara (Dan) Niemann, and Judy Ravin, and grandmother of Corissa (Sev), Emily, Valerie (Josh), Matan (Roni), and Gilad (Emily). March 21.

Jeff (Sarah) Cohen on the death of his mother Roseann Cohen, grandmother of Adira and Ethan. March 23.

Claire Chapnick on the death of her mother, Susan Rita Chapnick, March 15.

Brad Beaver on the death of his mother, Phyllis Horwitz, March 30.

Alice Liberson on the death of her father, Bill Liberson, April 1.

Charles Weaver on the death of his wife, Tamar Weaver, April 3.

Dina Shtull on the death of her mother, Rita Shtull.

The Washtenaw Jewish community sends mazel tovs to:

Ruth Moscow-Cohen and Robert Cohen on the birth of their granddaughter, Esme June. December 7.

Allison Billi and Adam Markovitz on the birth of their daughter, and to Sheryl Hirsch and Jack Billi on the birth of their granddaughter, Chiara Rose Markovitz. March 31.

Asher Stein on his bar mitzvah, May 6

Maya Kross on her bat mitzvah, May 27.

Benjamin Harooni on his bar mitzvah, May 27 (afternoon).

Cyril Moscow and Ruth Moscow & Bob Cohen on the birth of their great granddaughter and granddaughter, Esme June, daughter of Anna Cohenand Michael Keefer.

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BEST OF SENIOR LIVING
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2023

Obituaries

Rita Shtull beloved wife of the late Rabbi Jacob Shtull. Loving mother of Dr. Kiva (Penny) Shtull, Simcha (Rabbi Dan Bridge) Shtull, Dina (Dr. Steve Leber) Shtull-Leber, and Ora (Henri Talerman) Shtull. Devoted grandmother of Moriah, Lila, Ivy, Itamar, Hadar, Asaf, Eliav, Ilanit, Eytan, Leor, Noa, Amitai, and Carmel. Great-grandmother of Ada, Gabriel, Leonor, Yonatan, Yuli, Nitzan, Meital, and Aviv.

Rita (née Estrin) Shtull was born in Brooklyn, NY, in 1931. She attended local public schools, Brooklyn College, and Herzliyah Hebrew College (NY). She later earned a Master's Degree in Education at Case Western Reserve University (Cleveland).

In 1951, Rita married Jacob Shtull, a JTS rabbinical student, and they spent the first few years of their marriage in London, Ontario, Canada.

After moving to Cleveland, she pursued a career in Hebrew and Jewish education in a variety of settings. She founded the Hebrew school at Congregation Shaarey Tikvah (then known as Mayfield Temple); taught Hebrew language at Cleveland Heights High School (where she also served briefly as 10th grade principal); and was principal at Solomon Schechter Day School.

Hebrew education, synagogue, and Jewish family life were Rita's passions. She worked full-time while raising four children. In her retirement, Rita volunteered at Menorah Park Center for the Aging. In her final years she lived at the Mary Schwartz Summit in Seattle, Washington.

Rita is surviving by her four children and their partners: Kiva (Penny Patterson), Simcha (Dan Bridge), Dina (Steve Leber), Ora (Henri Talerman); 13 grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren.

Donations in Rita's memory may be made to the Rabbi Jacob and Rita Shtull Education Fund at Shaarey Tikvah, or the charity of your choice.

Dr. Joseph Richard Zaientz passed away on March 11, 2023, at age 84. Joe (Doc) was predeceased by his parents Harry Zaientz and Edith (Perlin) Zaientz. He is survived by his beloved wife of 56 years Fredda (Pollans) Zaientz, by his three great sons Jack (Stephanie), Luke (Alice), and Nate (Sara), and his six wonderful grandchildren Eva, Lila, Sadie, Mollie, Samuel, and Benjamin. He also leaves his sister Helen Liveten, his brothers-in-law Ken (Maria) Pollans and Larry (Barbara Baum) Pollans, and many dear friends.

Joe graduated from Cheshire Academy, Duke University, and the University of Pennsylvania School of Dentistry. He leaves an admirable legacy of participation in his community in many areas. He was in the Army for three years including one as Captain in the Dental Corps in Vietnam. After he and Fredda married, they settled in Haddam where Joe established his dental practice. He became a volunteer fireman in the Haddam Neck Volunteer Fire Department and served over 40 years as fire fighter, training officer, secretary, captain, chief, certified EMT, and president of the Board of Directors of the Haddam Fire Department. He was active in Haddam Public Health as treasurer, then as president for three terms. In 1994 he established the Haddam Shad Museum to commemorate and celebrate the history of shad fishing on the Connecticut River. He recently donated the Museum to the Haddam Historical Society to ensure its continuation. He also drove for Meals on Wheels delivery for over 12 years.

Joe also actively supported the Jewish community at Congregation Adath Israel in Middletown. He served on the Board of Directors, on various committees, and as vice-president of the synagogue.

Even with all those activities he still enjoyed participating in family affairs and pursuing many interesting hobbies. Joe was an amazing man who will be deeply missed by his family, friends, and associates.

Joan Ravin, cherished wife, mother, and grandmother, passed away on March 21, 2023, at the age of 85 from complications related to Parkinson's disease and vascular dementia. Joan was born in Manhattan and attended the University of Buffalo, where she met her husband, Bob. As she was waiting for a date in her dorm, Bob introduced himself and convinced her to go out with him instead. And although she didn't know it at the time, this was not Joan's first introduction to the Ravin family. When she was 11 years old, Joan was traveling by bus with her mother from Atlantic City to Manhattan. Since there weren't two seats together, her mother found a lovely woman for Joan to sit with. The woman spoke to Joan about her son, Bob. Fast forward eight years later, when Bob brought Joan home to meet his parents. It didn't take long to figure out that the woman on the bus was Bob's mother. Destiny became history.

Bob and Joan married in 1957 and moved to Ann Arbor, where they raised three daughters and were active members of Temple Beth Emeth for more than 60 years. Joan retired from the University of Michigan Stores in 1997. Joan's greatest passion was her family. She was authentic, kind, and generous, an empathetic listener known for her wise judgment and encouraging words. Always positive, Joan put the needs of her family first. Her grandchildren adored their beloved "Grandma Joanie." She welcomed their friends into her home, making sure the freezer was stocked with Girl Scout cookies and homemade brownies to enjoy around the backyard pool.

Joan and Bob were snowbirds in Florida for 21 years. Joan loved all things Florida, especially walking Siesta Key beach, asking everyone where they were from and saying "Go Blue" to all who wore a U-M hat or t-shirt. Bob and Joan created numerous family memories in Sarasota that their children and grandchildren will always treasure. An avid reader, accomplished piano player, excellent cook and gracious hostess, Joan was also a huge basketball fan. She enjoyed euchre, bridge, and board games. Joan was known for baking a "welcome" gift for new neighbors and cooking for neighbors and friends in need. Joan loved to travel; she and Bob had many trips with family, friends, and colleagues. Highlights included several trips to Israel (she loved Haifa), exploring the Canadian Rockies with Joan's cousins, a trip to Rome with the American Society of Hospital Pharmacists, and a week in Paris with her daughters.

Joan is survived by her husband Bob; daughters Barbara (Dan), Debra (Jerry), and Judy; and grandchildren Corissa (Sev), Emily, Valerie (Josh), Matan (Roni), and Gilad (Emily). Those who knew Joan were touched by her loving heart, bright smile, and selfless spirit. Her sweet gentle way will be missed by all.

Susan Rita Chapnick passed away on March 15. She is survived by her children, Claire Chapnick (Gerald Sorokin) and Gary Chapnick (Michele); and her grandchildren, Sasha Chapnick-Sorokin, Phoebe Chapnick-Sorokin and Josh Chapnick. She is also survived by other loving family members and friends.

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